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Paschasius of Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Saint John of the Cross

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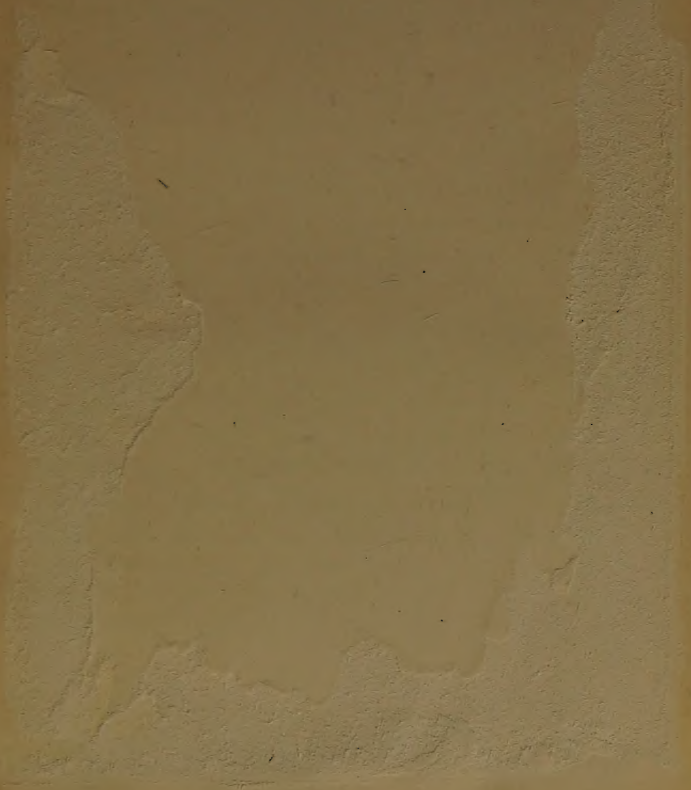

SAINT JOHN OF THE CROSS

Paschasius of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Father, 1867

SAINT JOHN OF THE CROSS

By FATHER PASCHASIUS HERIZ, O. C. D.
COLLEGE OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

WASHINGTON, D. C.
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I am very glad to recommend this new Life of the Mystical Doctor, St. John of the Cross.

This work comes at a most opportune time. If ever the world felt the need of the beautiful teachings of the Saviour of Men, it feels it now, when, after four years of war, human philosophy has proved how futile it is to satisfy the heart and mind of man. This ideal of conduct and right thinking is to be found in the life of St. John of the Cross, who interpreted in terms of daily experimental contact with the world, the all-satisfying lessons of Christ.

Moreover, the fact that the Life of St. John of the Cross comes from the pen of Rev. Paschasius of the Carmelite Community at the Catholic University of America, is sufficient guarantee of its scholarship and authenticity.

I beg God's blessing upon this work and trust that the wholesome and exalted personal influence of the great Spanish Mystic may touch the hearts of all readers.

J. Card. Gibbons.

September 19, 1919.

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WORKS OF SAINT JOHN OF THE CROSS

Subida del Monte Carmelo—**Ascent of Mount Carmel*

Noche oscura—**Dark Night*

Cantico espiritual—**Spiritual Canticle*

Llama de amor viva—**Living Flame of Love*

Cautelas—**Precautions*

Cuatro avisos a un religioso—*Four Counsels to a Religious*

Avisos y sententias—**Counsels and Maxims*

Dictamenes de espiritu—*Spiritual Opinions*

Cartas espirituales—**Spiritual Letters*

Poesias—**Poems*

Coloquios entre el espose Cristo y su esposa el almo—*Colloquies between Christ and the Soul*

Tratado breve del conocimiento oscuro de Dios —*Brief tract on the Knowledge of God in Darkness*

Transformacion del alma en Dios—*Transformation of the Soul in God*

Union del alma con Dios—*Union of the Soul with God*

* Marks those works which have been translated into English.

PREFACE

As in every normal and perfect birth, the holy order of Carmel was born of a father and mother. The mother, origin and principal in this spiritual generation, was the Most Blessed Virgin Mary. Centuries before her own birth, foreseen in a mysterious cloud, the holy prophet Elias worshiped her, and in her honor, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, he established the ancient and venerable Order of Carmel. Thus the Most Holy Virgin is the principal cause and original patroness of the order, its special protection, its faithful and most affectionate mother, manifesting God's design by her activity throughout the ages.

The father of Carmel was the wonderful and holy Prophet Elias, ardent zealot of the glory of God, voice of his oracles and righthand of his power, born in flames and fed, according to St. Epiphanius, by angels with flames instead of milk, taken to heaven in a chariot of fire, and there blissfully held in mystery to return as defender of the Church and forerunner of Christ when he comes to judge the living and the dead.

Such are the parents of the illustrious and most ancient family of Carmel.

Similarly, in its renovation, when, through the reform of the Discalced Carmelites in Spain,

the order was born anew, God provided for it a mother in St. Teresa of Jesus, who performed the office and mirrored the virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary. As Mary, without offense to her virginal purity, became mother of God and of his children, so Teresa, preserving for her divine spouse the treasure of her virginity, became the spiritual mother of innumerable children of Carmel.

The father of the reformed Carmel was a second Elias, like to the first in name, in spirit, armed with burning zeal, attired in penitential apparel, glowing with the flames of seraphic ardor and winning his way to the highest top of the mystical Mount Carmel. This was our blessed and most devoted father, St. John of the Cross, brightness and glory of the reformed family of Carmel, their master, captain, guide.

Though he is the first-born spiritual son of St. Teresa, he is at the same time our cherished and revered father, for from the very beginning he fostered us. In Holy Writ, Ner is called the father of his brother Cis, and Igal the son of his brother Nathan. So, in our holy order, the first-born son of St. Teresa and beloved brother of all the Discalced Carmelites, is nevertheless truly our father as well.

Now in order that the second generation of Carmel should be like its first generation, God gave us St. Teresa in the likeness of the Most

Holy Virgin Mary, and St. John of the Cross, a perfect figure of St. Elias. Moreover there is a wonderful likeness between St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross in their supernatural gifts, their wisdom and their mastery in the doctrines of mystical theology and the ways of the Spirit. We leave the glories of St. Teresa to her own incomparable history of herself. In this brief narration of the life of St. John of the Cross we shall find him likewise a real apostle and prophet, powerful in words and works, and gifted with the double spirit of St. Elias.

THE LIFE OF ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS

CHAPTER FIRST

Birthplace and Family of Our Holy Father

Our holy father was a Spaniard, born at Hontiveros (Fons Tiberii), a noble village of Old Castile, in the diocese of Avila and not far from that city. His father was Gonzalo de Yepes, whose family gave its name to an ancient village in the vicinity of Toledo. His mother, Catalina Alvarez, was a native of Toledo.

Though Gonzalo de Yepes belonged to a rich and noble family, we shall find him in a very humble condition, working as a poor weaver. It came about in this wise: When his father died at Yepes he was taken by one of his uncles, a rich merchant, to Toledo, and employed in the business of the house. This took him on frequent visits to Medina del Campo, at that time a very flourishing city. Gonzalo was accustomed to break his journey at Hontiveros, lodging at the house of a widow of Toledo who had in her charge a friendless orphan named Catalina Alvarez. Gonzalo admired her virtues, especially her innocence and fervent Catholic devotion, qualities which he esteemed more than all the riches of the world.

Without consulting his family or even speaking a word on the subject with his kindred, Gonzalo made Catalina his wife. This, in the

opinion of his relatives, was a family disgrace. They disowned him; abandoned him entirely. Thenceforth he was an outcast, as poor as his penniless wife. Remembering that St. Joseph, descendant of a royal sceptre, spouse of the Queen of Heaven and foster-father of the Son of God, wielded a plane, Gonzalo very simply accommodated himself to his wife's estate, and learned from her the art of weaving silks and brocades. But his gains were so scanty that poverty came upon him like an armed man.

In the penury and toil of their life at Hontiveros three children were born to Gonzalo de Yepes and Catalina Alvarez, Francis, Luis and our holy father, Saint John of the Cross. The charitable widow who had been a mother to the motherless Catalina Alvarez, died; and the poverty-stricken family no longer received from her the help to which they had been accustomed. Then Gonzalo fell ill, and after ingering in pain for two years, died, leaving to his children the sole inheritance of an unsullied name. He had lived a good and pious life, in patience and humility conforming himself to the will of God. His widow, in great distress of mind and body, visited his relatives and implored help in behalf of his orphaned children, but in vain. Returning to Hontiveros she earned their bread with her own hands, John, the youngest, being an infant still in arms. In later years her hero-

ism was rewarded by the love and veneration of our holy mother, Saint Teresa, who commanded the Carmelite nuns of Medina del Campo to care for her till her death. They cherished her most tenderly and after her death buried her among the deceased sisters of the community.

In spite of her poverty, Catalina Alvarez made provision for the education of her children from their earliest childhood. But Luis, the second born, died in the bloom of his innocence; and Francis, the eldest, made little progress in human learning. Accordingly his mother set him to the weaver's trade, in which he lived and died as did his father before him. For a time they lived in Arevalo, where Francis married Ana Izquierda; then in, 1551, they moved to Medina del Campo.

Francis was twenty years of age when he came to Medina, but he was an old man in grace and goodness, given to mortification and prayer. In summer, like Isaac of old, he spent the nights in the fields praying to God. In winter he retired at nightfall into some church, or, if illness prevented, into a quiet corner of his own house, never dispensing himself, but praying without ceasing. This was his habit all his life, and for this God visited him in visions and revelations, trances and divine locutions; but never in the wealth of this world.

He had eight children. Seven died in infancy; one became a Cistercian nun in the monastery of the Holy Ghost at Olmedo.

Francis outlived his younger brother, Saint John of the Cross. He died at midnight on Friday, the feast of Saint Andrew, 1607; and then the whole city of Medina del Campo was moved, for he was regarded as a saint; he had wrought miracles, and had the gift of prophecy. He had been the poorest man in the city, but the canons of the collegiate church and representatives of four religious orders went to his house to bring him to the Church at St. Ana. He was borne on the shoulders of the friars of Carmel and of the canons, the latter doing for the poor weaver what they would not have done for the greatest personage in Spain.

CHAPTER SECOND

BIRTH OF ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS. HIS CHILDHOOD. THE MOTHER OF GOD PRESERVES HIS LIFE.

In the year 1542, when Paul III was Pope and Charles V King of Spain, our holy father, Saint John of the Cross, was born in Hontiveros. Was he born on the twenty-fourth of June, or the twenty-seventh of December? We do not know, but it must have been one or the other of these days, because he received the name John in baptism. It seems providential that we do not know which was his birthday or which his patron saint; for being, like the Baptist, the most perfect model of monks, and, like the Evangelist, the most sublime mystical writer, he resembles both in spirit as well as in name. As stated in the first volume of the extant baptismal record of the parish church of Hontiveros, a fire which reduced the church to ashes in July, 1546, consumed the book in which the baptism of our holy father was recorded.

Catalina Alvarez reared her children in utmost poverty, but with the greatest care and motherly affection. She taught them to invoke the most sweet name of Jesus, to keep always on their lips the holy name of Mary, to join their voices to the universal prayer of the

Church, to fear God, to venerate holy things, to shun evil and love virtue. To safeguard her children from all ideas less holy and pure than these, she worked by their side and made herself the companion of their play.

Blessed by Almighty God with such a mother, little John made wonderful progress. He seemed to have a natural inclination to piety. He was so meek. quiet and humble that his gentleness belied his age; while the flowers of his tender years gave promise of the seasoned fruits of his maturity. God formed in his youthful soul a most wonderful image of high perfection.

We have the following story to remind us of the signal favors bestowed on him from earliest childhood by his heavenly mother, the Blessed Virgin. One day little John with another child of his own age was playing beside a deep, muddy pool, throwing reeds into the water and recovering them when they rose again to the surface. Bending too far over the brink to catch his reed, little John fell into the pool and at once sank out of sight. But he immediately returned to the surface, like one of the reeds, and remained there without being injured or in the least disturbed. He was quite clear in his conviction that he had been saved from death by the queen of heaven. And now she appeared to him, stretching out her most pure hand and

asking him to place his own in it that she might draw him from the pool. But John, seeing her so pure and heavenly, declined, for fear of sullying her. The queen repeated her request, and he made his excuses, in a serene and beautiful contest of courtesy, until a man in peasant garb came bearing a rod in his hand, stretched it to the child and drew him safely to the bank; then went his way. Those who tell the tale favor the belief that this was none other than Saint Joseph.

The apparition filled the child with joy. The fervent devotion of that day never deserted him, and whenever he passed that place in after years he made a devout pilgrimage to the spot to renew with grateful tears his consecration of himself to the Mother of God. Pharaoh's daughter and Moses floating on the waters of the Nile are to us a feeble foreshadowing of this queen of heaven whose most pure hand was outstretched to save the future leader of God's chosen people, the great family of Carmel, from out the Egypt of this world, through the penitential life of the monastery, to the holy mountain of interior peace.

CHAPTER THIRD.

THE BLESSED CHILD JOHN IS ATTACKED BY THE DEVIL. HE CONQUORS THE ENEMY WITH RELIGIOUS FIRMNESS. HIS DEVOTION IN ASSISTING AT MASS. HE ENTERS THE HOSPITAL OF MEDINA DEL CAMPO. HE IS SAVED AGAIN BY THE BLESSED MOTHER FROM CERTAIN DEATH.

The devil was not pleased with the happy beginnings of the life of John. He could see in them the loss he was destined to suffer through the servant of God. Always, from afar, the devil forecasts the Christian perfection of those who are called by God to eminent sanctity—how, we do not know. Perhaps he sees in the humors and qualities of their bodies a physical aptitude for virtuous living. Perhaps he is warned by the superior excellence and dignity of the guardian angels who are given to them. Perhaps he sees also some special signs of the extraordinary providence God bestows on them from the very moment of their creation. In whatever manner he may acquire this knowledge, whether by the natural sagacity of his powerful intellect, or by some special divine dispensation, one thing is certain, that from their earliest infancy the devil is accustomed to persecute the elect with terrific rage.

Seeing, therefore, in our saint, such a prompt disposition for every virtue, such extraordinary favors, including the personal protection of the Mother of God; seeing also, perhaps, together with all this, some very superior guardian angel assigned to care for him, and knowing these things to be signs of the wonderful sanctity and power which would war against him as his capital enemy, the devil wished to stop all in the very beginning by taking the child's life. Failing in this, he was determined to discourage and frighten him to such an extent that he would abandon his purpose to live virtuously. The venerable Francis de Yepes, brother of our saint, relates that when both were very small they were going in company with their good mother to Medina. Just before entering the city they had to pass a pool, probably the same from which our Lady had saved him, and there a large, fierce monster came out of it and attacked him, trying to swallow him up; but he, without fear or distress, made the sign of the cross to defend himself, and immediately the horrible vision disappeared. Herein were symbolized all the troubles and persecutions by which the saint was afflicted during his life, and the triumphs our holy father achieved over the devil by the holy cross, making it a part of his name, and planting it firmly in the reformed Carmel.

Our little John was growing more rapidly in virtue than in years. His pious mother, wishing to guide him to well-rounded perfection, tried to induce him to learn some trade; but the boy, so quick and intelligent at school, was too dull to learn any of those common in the city. Francis de Yepes says his holy brother was apprenticed in succession to the tailor's, carpenter's, engraver's and painter's trades. His ability to earn a living was tried in many ways, but he could not be taught. He did not seem to have the power of learning anything whatever. It was waste of time.

God had higher work for him, and made his mother send him to school. She cherished very much the idea of placing him in a good college, but her extreme poverty came in the way, and she had to be contented with a school in Medina where poor and orphaned children were educated. Here John remained some time attending to his studies and other exercises, especially those of prayer and devotion, in which he was a model to the other children. At this time he used to go early in the morning to the monastery of St. Mary Magdalene, of the Augustinian nuns. There he served mass with such recollection and devotion as to attract the notice of those who were present, and inspire them to serve God more faithfully.

Unalloyed virtue is so lovely in itself that the human heart cannot resist its beauty. Our

blessed child had neither friends nor family nor riches, nor other natural gifts to attract affection, but his wonderful virtues, even in tenderest childhood, were irresistibly winsome. Poor and forsaken by all, his modesty, gentleness and prudence caused him to be universally admired and loved. Among those whom he attracted most was a gentleman from Toledo, Alonso Alvarez, who, weary of the world, devoted himself to the service of the poor and the sick. He had taken on himself the charge of the hospital of Medina. Knowing well the wonderful virtues of little John and his hopeless struggle to earn bread for himself and his mother, Senor Alvarez went to her and offered to take the boy into his service in the hospital.

John was twelve or thirteen years of age. His character had already in many respects attained majority. His new patron proposed that he should serve the poor, at the same time continuing his studies. Afterwards he intended to ordain him priest, and make him chaplain and superintendent of the large and flourishing institution. The offer was gladly accepted by mother and son, and Juan de Yepes became the servant of the poor in the public hospital of Medina.

Shortly afterwards, being at work in the court yard of the place, he fell into a well which had been left uncovered. The people who saw him fall made an outcry, thinking it was impos-

sible to save him, for the well was deep and there was much water in it. Rescuers rushed into the court yard and looked into the well. There they saw the boy resting on the surface of the water, calm and unhurt. He answered their cries quietly and cheerfully. Having drawn him up by a rope, they asked him how it had happened. He replied with great simplicity that a beautiful lady had received him in her arms as he was falling and sustained him till they came and let down the rope.

The people wondered, and accounted the boy as one whom God was preserving for great things. Recalling his already marvelous life, they looked at one another and repeated what was said of the great Baptist, precursor of Christ, "What an one, think ye, shall this child be? For the hand of the Lord was with him." (St. Luke 1-66).

CHAPTER FOURTH

His Charity for the Poor. His Studies. His Prayer and Rigorous Penance. Christ Our Lord is the Model of His Life and Actions. His Tender Devotion to the Blessed Mother.

Now that the hospital afforded him many occasions to practice virtues, they shone in him with new splendor. Forgetful of sleep and weariness, he watched day and night at the bed-side of the poor. He did not feel his own fatigues but only the pains of his dear patients, giving them medicines and care with more than motherly affection. Here our Lord commenced to show him the rich mines of the virtue of charity and he began to enrich himself with its treasures. He learned to sympathize with the poor sufferer confined to a painful bed whose only relief and consolation are the loving kindness of his nurse. He caressed the weak, encouraged the feeble, associated himself with the lonely, entertained and consoled the sorrowful and devoted himself with extreme diligence to the necessities of all.

Having fulfilled these obligations, he spent the rest of his time in study and prayer, paying to each of them so much attention that, with the grace of God and his brilliant mind, in a short

time he made wonderful progress both in prayer and learning. About his aptitude and love for studies, his brother, Francisco de Yepes, says, "He was placed by his mother during the first school years, in the College of Christian Doctrine. They taught him there to read and write, and in a very short time he learned both very well." Further on he says, "Being there in the hospital, this gentleman, Don Alfonso Alvarez, asked him to make collections for the poor. This gentleman and all the other persons of the hospital loved him very much. They gave him leave to go and study Latin in the Jesuit college. His professor was Padre Bonifacio, who is still living. He was so clever in his studies that, with the aid of God, he progressed rapidly in a very short time. They related in the hospital that looking for him in the night, often they could not find him till at last they discovered him in the barn studying" (Relaciones, Fol. 613).

In the Jesuit college he studied grammar and rhetoric, displaying exceptional capacity. Later on, in philosophy, his sagacity penetrated the most delicate subtilties of metaphysics. Beginning already at this time, he consecrated his learning to the knowledge of God and himself as related to God, which is the supremely legitimate use of learning. That part of philosophy which explains the nature and properties of the

human soul he studied with greatest care, trying to understand well its functions and effects in our body, its faculties, the organs and senses through which it operates, and the manner of understanding in the present life, by means of the forms and likeness of things, called phantasms by the philosophers. He knew these studies would help him understand prayer and contemplation. His admirable writings, in which he makes use of rigid philosophical principles to explain with great preciseness the most intimate operations of the soul, both in ordinary prayer and in the highest supernatural communications with God, are a monument to his diligence as a student of philosophy.

With the same eagerness and devotion he practiced mental prayer. From his earliest age our Lord began to visit him with divine communications, giving him a foretaste of heavenly sweetness and light. He went to prayer as to a divine school, where the Sovereign Master enlightened his mind and moved his will to love heavenly things and despise the perishable goods of earth, to know the beauty of virtue and the foulness of vice. It was in prayer that he learned to deny himself and mortify his senses; to distrust every sensible affection, and to be "sober, having on the breastplate of faith and charity, and, for a helmet, the hope of salvation" (I Thess. 5-8).

The effects of his wonderful spiritual development were manifest in his acts and manner of living. He chastised his body, though innocent, with vigils, fastings, disciplines and hair-shirts. Not satisfied with the heavy work of assisting the sick at the hospital, and many hours of prayer, when night came he continued his efforts to pray. He struggled against the weakness of his body until he had thoroughly expelled drowsiness, in order that prayer might be prolonged. When he was at last overcome by sleep, he mortified this solace with the hardness of his bed, which consisted of a heap of twigs. This penitential custom was observed in him as early as his seventh year.

From the very moment of the use of his reason he offered himself to the Lord, presenting his body a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing unto God, his reasonable service, as St. Paul exhorts us (Rom. 12, 1). He practised from that tender age what he enjoined on others many years later in the Ascent of Mount Carmel, "First of all, have a constant care and desire of imitating Christ in everything, conforming yourself to his life, which you must study well to know how to follow it; behave in all things like Christ himself." In this manner he printed in his soul the image of Christ our Lord, and in this divine and most brilliant mirror he studied how to order all his actions. At every step he ques-

tioned himself, "If Christ our Lord was doing what I am going to do, and was in my state in life, and represented my person and office, how would he behave? How would he be and act on this occasion? How would he study? How would he attend holy mass? With what reverence and confidence would he devote himself to prayer? With what love and affection would he attend and nurse the sick?"

"Be thou, O Lord, my master," he used to say, "for thou art my model and pattern. Teach me what to do and how to do it, that I may conform all my actions with thy divine actions."

Not with less confidence and affection did he consecrate himself to the Most Holy Virgin. Mindful of the favors he had received at her motherly hands, he tried to compensate her by unceasingly growing in devotion to her. He said the rosary and the little office daily on his knees, and remained long hours in her presence.

CHAPTER FIFTH

THE LORD CONSOLES HIM. HIS AMBITION TO BECOME PERFECT. HE IS SHOWN A REVELATION THAT HE WILL HELP IN THE REFORMATION OF CARMEL. HE IS RECEIVED IN THE CARMEL OF MEDINA.

While the only desire of John was to please the Lord, His Majesty was filling his soul with consolations and treasures, and the more mercies he received from God, so much the more he showed his gratitude by preparing himself for further graces.

When he was a young man of twenty years, he was as guileless as a child of two, and as prudent as a man of fifty. Never were seen in him the failings peculiar to twenty years; no levity, no restlessness or disorder whatever. He avoided frivolous company and worthless entertainments, and in this way he found much time for every virtuous exercise. What games ever distracted him from his study? What jokes from his earnestness? Profane spectacles did not attract his eyes, nor perishable goods his will. From the world he coveted nothing but its contempt. The school, the church, and the hospital were dearest to him. The prudence of his words, the modesty of his aspect, and the gentleness of his manners made him amiable and

venerable. It is enough to say that the eulogy of Tobias was verified in him, "And when he was younger than any of the tribe of Nephtali, yet did he no childish thing in his work" (Tob. 1-4). The old monks gave to the great Macarius of Egypt the name Paidariogeron, which, translated to our language, means *old-youth,* or, as the Latin has it, *puer centum annorum.* Such was John, and such were not only the signs, but the evident proofs of the natural and supernatural gifts with which he was endowed.

Great and generous souls often show in their childhood a kind of vicious exuberance, sure signs of great capacity and natural talent for virtue and of the fruits which right education will develop in them. But our John did not manifest any youthful waywardness. He produced well-seasoned fruits of high perfection from the very first, and this we may consider evidence of his destiny, not only to be a model of the highest perfection, but also to establish, or re-establish, it in organized society.

In earnest of this, our Lord visited him with a marvelous vision. The devout young man was praying one day with his accustomed fervor and devotion, asking the Lord to guide him to the state of life in which he could serve him best, being entirely resigned to the divine will; saying with the psalmist, "I have put my trust in thee, O Lord; I said, 'Thou art my God, my

lots are in thy hands' " (Psalm 30:15, 16). The Lord heard his prayer, and consoled him, saying, "Thou art to serve me in an order, the ancient perfection of which thou shalt help to bring back again."

He understood that God wished him to become a religious, and he was content; but he could not understand that he was to do so great a work as to recover the former greatness of any order. He shrank from the task, and, so far as he could, banished the thought of it from his mind; for he looked upon it as a snare and occasion of delusion to his soul. He confessed this at a later time to the saintly nun, the Venerable Anne of Jesus.

Hitherto he had no thought about religious life as possible for him, but from this time forth the desire to leave the world, into which he had never entered, grew very strong. The more he prayed, the more he longed to be a religious, but he was not inclined more towards one than another order; he was equally indifferent to all and all were equally desired. In this uncertainty, he redoubled his prayers and penances, asking most humbly the divine Majesty to enlighten him in the choice of the order where he might concentrate himself entirely to God.

The Carmelites of the old observance had come to the city of Medina in the year 1560 and founded the convent of St. Anne. One day

John went to St. Anne's, and at the sight of the Carmelite habit he was deeply moved. Never before had it made such an impression on him. By this he understood that he was called to Carmel. He was glad he had been poor all his life, and that he now could embrace poverty as his bride and give himself up to our Lord in his poverty.

He went into the house and begged to be received into the order. The friars were pleased, because he was well known in the city. Accordingly, he received the habit on the Feast of St. Mathias, February 24, 1563, being then in the twenty-first year of his age. He was delighted with his lot, reckoning himself as fortunate as St. Mathias, who was numbered with the twelve apostles; and, therefore, he took that name, calling himself John of St. Mathias. He improved his surname later, when his own condition was changed for the better, by calling himself Father John of the Cross.

CHAPTER SIXTH

His Fervor in the Novitiate. His Zeal and Prudence. His Profession. He Keeps the Primitive Rule of Carmel.

During his novitiate his regularity and obedience, his fervor and recollection, his austerities and penances, were a fountain of edification to all in the house.

Once his humility and prudence were severely tested in a crisis which novices can rarely, if ever, meet without some imperfection. He was with a father of the order who behaved somewhat carelessly in the presence of seculars. John of Mathias was the only religious who saw the fault committed. The historians have said it was not a serious fault, but merely unbecoming in a Carmelite. The novice reminded the father of his fault; and he did so with so much humility and discretion that the father not only was not offended, but, on the contrary, he corrected himself, and accepted the correction with joy.

In the following year, in 1564, John made his profession before Fra Angel de Salazar, the provincial of Castile. His great protector, Don Alonso Alvarez, was present at the ceremony. The record of his profession, signed by the saint, was preserved in the house as a pre-

cious relic. A special book, very richly bound, was made to keep it, and also a very precious casket was made for it. This document and the small cell in which our saint lived, converted into a chapel after his death, were kept in great veneration in that monastery, though the monastery itself never adopted the reform of St. Teresa. But the house ever afterwards retained traces of the saintly novice, John of St. Mathias, in the regular observance and edifying punctuality of the community in all its duties.

Seeing himself now a child of religion, whose mother and protector was the most holy mother of God, from whom he had received great favors, he found it hard to satisfy his fervor of gratitude towards God and the mother of Carmel; therefore, he began to consider anew the obligations of his state.

Giving continual thanks to God for having brought him into the safe sanctuary of our Lady of Mount Carmel, his first care was to study carefully the rule of his order with the purpose of keeping it perfectly. He found that the order, though professing the rule given by St. Albert, patriarch of Jerusalem, was not conformed to the rule as it was given to the ancient Carmelites, nor as it was approved by Innocent IV; but lived according to the mitigated rule approved by Eugenius IV, who had dispensed with its chief rigors and most heroic observ-

ances. Discovering all these things, he procured the rule in its primitive form, and, reading it carefully, he was inspired with an ardent desire of observing it in all its points. But, being a child of obedience, he would do nothing of his own will; he had once given his will to his superiors, and would never resume it again. However, he could represent his wishes to them, and did so. They listened to him, perhaps with some misgiving, but they did not resist, lest they should put out a flame which our Lord had kindled. They gave him permission to observe the primitive rule, provided that no duty of the community be neglected and the present discipline of the house be maintained in everything.

He entered now on a life of penance, which, under existing conditions, was much more severe than the primitive rule required. He was present at all the exercises of the community in choir, chapter, and refectory, avoiding all appearance of singularity, and outwardly differing in nothing from the other friars of the house. Yet he was fasting from the feast of the Holy Cross in September till Easter in the following year, and abstaining wholly from flesh meat throughout the year, according to the primitive rule. But, as no special provision was made for him in the house, and he attended daily in the refectory where meat was served according to the dispensation of Eugenius IV, it was hard

for him to disguise his own mortification and at the same time find food enough to support life. He had nothing in his cell, and he would not eat except at the appointed hours. He kept silence also, according to the primitive rule, and for that purpose used to retire to his cell the moment he was free from the duties he had to discharge in public. He labored also with his hands, as the ancient hermits did, making in his cell crosses, disciplines, and other instruments of penance; but his chief work was prayer, which is the true work of a friar of Carmel, for it is said in the rule, "Let all remain in their cells, or near them, meditating night and day in the law of the Lord." He loved this holy exercise more than all the rest, and it struck down into his heart very deep roots, producing the most excellent fruits of high contemplation and heroic sanctity. Nor did he forget the holy poverty recommended by the rule; and, therefore, he did not admit in his cell, bed, or dress, anything which was not absolutely necessary for the use of human life and the decency of the religious state. He procured a narrow, incommodious and poor cell, an old patched habit, and everything else in his personal use showed poverty and humility.

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CHAPTER SEVENTH

His Studies and Austerities in Salamanca. He Refuses the Priestly Dignity, but is by Holy Obedience Obliged to Accept It. He is Confirmed in Grace During His First Mass.

The superiors of the order, discerning in John of St. Mathias great talents for theological studies, combined with sublime and rare virtues, determined to send him to their college in Salamanca, that by the help of learning he might become a laborer in the vineyard of the Lord. The college of the order in Salamanca was then known as the College of St. Andrew the Apostle, but later it was called St. Teresa's College. The school of theology in the university was celebrated throughout Europe. The Dominicans had given it professors of great names—Francis de Victoria, from the University of Paris; his famous pupil, Melchoir Cano, author of "De Locis Theologicis;" the celebrated Dominic de Soto, who assisted at the Council of Trent, and others. To this great divinity school was sent John of St. Mathias in the year 1564.

He was most diligent in attending the schools, but his studies never interfered with the severities of his penitential life. The life he led in

Salamanca was not less admirable than the one he had begun in Medina. Not satisfied with the fastings, abstinences, silence, and perpetual prayer commanded by the primitive rule, he added to them most terrific penances. He dwelt in a very narrow and dark cell. All the light he had came through a little hole in the roof. A shallow box, more like a coffin than anything else, was his bed. In that coffin, without any covering other than his habit, and a block of wood for his pillow, Fra John took his rest at night. But there was a window in his cell looking into the church. Through this window he could see the tabernacle on the altar in which our Lord was dwelling. That sight comforted him more than anything the world could show him.

His cell, so poor and edifying, has always been held in great veneration, and is now one of the chapels or side altars in the church of the monastery.

The primitive rule is austere enough even for souls athirst for penance, but for John of St. Mathias the burden was too light. He girt his loins with an iron chain studded with sharp points. Next to his body he wore a dress made of coarse grass, like a fisherman's net, the thick knots of which were as hard as stones; this he covered with the habit of the order. He relieved the resultant unceasing distress by the use of

the most cruel disciplines, the effects of which could not always be concealed from his companions and superiors.

It was a new and sharp penance to him when his secret mortifications became known to others.

Prayer and austerities were the two wings of the spirit with which he made his flight to the top of the mystical Mount of Carmel. Prayer was his life, his food and nourishment. He fulfilled the great precept of the rule, to pray day and night, meditating in the law of the Lord.

Though he was allowed to keep the primitive rule, he never failed to observe the minutest practice in force in the house where he was living. He never dispensed himself, nor claimed any exemption on the ground that he kept a more austere rule than his brethren. Modest, humble, and silent, he did the work he had to do. Everything was in order within him; he was regular in the house, punctual in the choir and in the schools; no duty ever interfered with another. Nor was he carried away by the love of learning from the more important work of prayer. He made the lectures he heard minister to his prayer; and in prayer he found the light which enabled him to profit by the lectures of his learned masters.

Always cheerful and recollected, he was held in respect even by the turbulent youth of a

great university, and by his superiors he was specially beloved. On his way to and from the university he observed angelic modesty, kept his eyes fixed on the ground and his heart in heaven, and edified his fellow-students with his exterior deportment. In public disputations he spoke modestly and to the point. When defeated in the contest, he acknowledged his opponent's skill, but was never troubled at his own failure; neither was he elated when successful in his disputations. As soon as the scholastic exercises were over, he retired to the quiet of his cell, his mind disengaged from scholastic subtleties, and his imagination free from the divers phantasms of contests whose disorderly hubbub would have been an impediment to his continual prayer. On account of his marvelous virtues he was specially loved in his own order and college, where the young looked up to him with respect, the aged bestowed on him their esteem and affection, and all took great care not to say or do anything unseemly in his presence.

In 1567, having completed his theological studies and attained his twenty-fifth year, he was commanded by his superiors to prepare himself for the priesthood. He had shrunk from that dignity when in the hospital of Medina del Campo, but it was not in his power now to do what he did then. He was now under obe-

dience. So, bewailing his great unworthiness, of which he alone was conscious, he went into retreat, and was ordained priest in Salamanca in the same year. As soon as he was ordained, his superiors sent him back to Medina del Campo, there to sing his first mass, partly because he belonged to that convent, having taken the habit there, and partly to give pleasure to his poor mother, who had trained him in poverty and had given him to serve our Lord in poverty for the rest of his life.

He came to Medina del Campo and began to prepare himself to offer up for the first time the sacrifice of the new law. He redoubled his austerities and prolonged his vigils, giving himself wholly to prayer. Always he had lived a life of detachment and purity; now he felt that it was more necessary than ever for him to keep close to God, lest sin should come between and separate him from the only love of his soul. On the appointed day, he went up to the altar and made the great oblation. Then, holding in his hands God, his maker, he prayed to him with all his might for grace to persevere in purity of life, and never to stain the innocence of his baptismal robe. The cry of the saint went straight to the heart of God, and John heard an inward voice saying, "Thy prayer is granted."

The holy priest, overflowing with joy, full of humility and gratitude for such a favor, felt in

his soul a spiritual renewal and strong conviction that God had granted him a child's purity and had confirmed him in grace as he had confirmed the holy apostles.

These facts were attested by his confessors under oath, and were revealed by God to the Venerable Mothers Ana Maria of Jesus and Beatriz of St. Michael, who made sworn affidavits of all the circumstances. This was not unknown to our holy mother St. Teresa, who used to say frequently that Father John of the Cross was one of the most pure and holy souls in the Church; that God had infused in him great treasures of purity and heavenly wisdom, and that, in her opinion, he was a saint during all his life.

CHAPTER EIGHTH

ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS INTENDS TO BECOME A CARTHUSIAN. HE MEETS ST. TERESA AT MEDINA AND OFFERS HIMSELF TO HER FOR THE REFORMATION OF THE FATHERS.

Great graces from God bring with them anxiety to safeguard them. Recalling the promise made him while saying mass for the first time, St. John studied carefully the means in his power to persevere in the state of divine grace. He saw how necessary it was for him to withdraw farther and farther from the commerce of men, and, if possible, retire into the wilderness where God communicates himself to the soul. He had made the offering of his whole self, and had nothing more to offer now; but it was his duty still to watch with Abraham, and drive away the birds of the air, lest they should devour and defile the sacrifice. There seemed no other way before him except to leave the order of Carmel and become a Carthusian; for that was the only order a mendicant monk could enter.

During this time, our mother St. Teresa had reformed the order among the nuns and was looking for some priest who had embraced the rule to help her in the most arduous work of reforming the fathers of Carmel also. The first

thought and desire for discalced Carmelite fathers came from the generous and brave heart of St. Teresa. She had recourse to prayer, and with unceasing tears like another Rachel, entreated God for children (Gen. 30-1). With this thought and desire, being in Medina del Campo, where she had just finished the second foundation of nuns, St. Teresa communicated confidentially her thoughts and desires to Father Antonio de Heredia, prior of the calced Carmelites of that city. He promised to be the first to take off his shoes and become a barefooted friar of the primitive observance. St. Teresa was pleased with this resolution, but was not fully satisfied, fearing that he would not be strong enough to bear the austerities.

After his first mass in Medina, Father John of St. Mathias went back to Salamanca to finish his course in the university. Later in the year he came back with Fra Pedro de Orozco to Medina, with the intention of going to the Carthusians of Segovia, to hide himself from contact with men, that he might serve God without any distraction. He remained, however, in the monastery of St. Anne for some time, where his resolution of going to the Carthusians was known at least to Fra Pedro, who told St. Teresa what he knew of the fervent spirit hidden in the frail body of Fra John of St. Mathias, and his earnest desire to become a Carthusian

for the sake of a more perfect life than it was possible to lead among the Carmelites of the mitigation.

Fra John of St. Mathias was twenty-five years old when he went at the urgent request of Fra Pedro de Orozco to see St. Teresa in her monastery of Medina. He had been about four years in the order, to the reform of which he was now called by the voice of St. Teresa, who was herself in her fifty-third year, and had been in the order more than thirty-three years. The two saints met for the first time in the Carmelite house of St. Joseph in Medina del Campo. The nun told the friar what she intended to do, and the friar told her how he had for some time wished to become a Carthusian because he believed himself called to a life of more retirement and prayer. As the conversation continued, and the older saint represented to the younger one that he would do greater service to God if he remained where he was and helped her to restore the primitive rule of his order than if he left it to embrace another, Fra John, humble and self-denying, yielded to the persuasion of St. Teresa, and consented to do her bidding, provided the reform should be commenced without delay.

He was the gift of God to St. Teresa, who was now content. She had found the one man on whom she could depend; for though she had

already accepted on certain conditions the prior of Medina, Fra Antonio de Heredia, she was not wholly satisfied with him, and, therefore, she waited a while, partly because of her want of perfect confidence in Fra Antonio and partly because she had no house to give them, nor the means wherewith to buy one. But her poverty did not trouble her; on the contrary, she was gladdened by it.

She used to say that she began the work when she had found a friar and a half, referring to the fact that Fra Antonio was a portly personage of dignified presence and Fra John was small of stature and worn already by penances. There was nothing in him outwardly to command the respect of ordinary men. But St. Teresa knew his worth. About the interpretation of the words, *friar and a half,* there are two opinions. Some say St. Teresa referred to the outward appearance of the two friars calling Fra Antonio, on account of his dignified presence, one friar, and St. John of the Cross, because of his small stature and the wornout condition of his health, half a friar. Others say the Mystic Doctor referred to their moral and spiritual worth. Of this opinion are, besides the nuns of Medina who lived together with the saint, Fra Manuel of St. Teresa, Fra Jose of St. Teresa, and many other writers of the order.

The two friars were willing to renounce the mitigated observances of the order, and to undertake the austerities of the primitive rule, but there was no house to lodge them, nor a single penny to buy one for them. They were, like St. Teresa, mendicants, and had no possessions; so they remained in the house of St. Anne of Medina, where they suffered many crosses.

St. Teresa went from Medina, about the end of October, 1567, to Madrid, thence to the monastery of the venerable Maria of Jesus in Alcala de Henares. In April, 1568, she made her foundation in Malagon, and was preparing to make another in Valladolid. In Malagon St. Teresa again met St. John of the Cross; and one day, while conversing together, both fell into a trance, and were seen by Mother Isabel of the Incarnation. Fra John was in the parlor of the monastery, and St. Teresa on the other side of the grating.

In June, St. Teresa returned to Avila to make final arrangements for the foundation of Valladolid; and while so occupied, Don Rafael Mejia Valasquez, to whom she had never spoken before, called upon her and offered a small cottage he had in Duruelo for the monastery of the discalced fathers. She accepted the offer with great gratitude, and went to see the place. On the road she and her companions missed

the way, and so reached the place late at night. The house was so filthy that the saint and her companions did not venture to pass the night in it. It had a porch, a small kitchen, and a room with a low garret. St. Teresa considered that place the Bethlehem of the reformed Carmel. Its utter wretchedness had won her.

The night was spent in the neighboring church. The next day St. Teresa reached Medina del Campo, and told the prior of the Carmelites that she had found the place. Fra Antonio was not alarmed by the account they gave him about the house. He said he would stay gladly even in a pigpen, provided he could keep the primitive rule there. Fra John of St. Mathias had no objection. The poverty of the house was a spell that attracted him.

But all the difficulties were not so easily overcome. The general of the order had given permission to found new monasteries on condition that the actual provincial and former provincial gave their consent. One of them, Fra Angel of Salazar, had already been involved in trouble with St. Teresa, and probably had not forgotten it.

CHAPTER NINTH

St. John of the Cross Takes the Habit of the Reformation in Medina del Campo. He Accompanies St. Teresa to Valladolid. He Goes From There to Duruelo and Begins the Reform.

St. John of the Cross, before leaving with St. Teresa for the foundation of Valladolid, took the habit of the reformation in the speak-room of Medina del Campo in the presence of the foundress. This is stated by several witnesses and specially by Dr. Alvaro de Marmol, Isabel de Santiago, Constanza Rodriguez, Juan Lopez Osorio and Catalina de Jesus. But until he went to Duruelo, he did not continue wearing the habit of the reformation for, as we shall see later, after having said the first mass in Duruelo, he put the new habit on the altar, blessed it, and then clothed himself with it.

St. Teresa went to Valladolid to make the foundation there, and took with her Fra Juan that he might see the way in which the rule was kept. In Valladolid the nuns had to live for some time in a monastery unenclosed, on account of the workmen in the house. This enabled him to see better their ways.

While he was thus, in a manner, novice a second time, St. Teresa was engaged in getting

the necessary permission of the provincial, Fra Alonso Gonzalez, who came at this time to Valladolid. He was not willing to accept the new foundation under his jurisdiction; but the bishop of Avila and his sister, Dona Maria de Mendoza, friends of St. Teresa, came also to Valladolid, and helped her to the utmost of their power. The two provincials gave their consent at last, moved not a little by some difficulties of their own, for the removal of which they wanted the help of the bishop's sister.

This opportunity of learning the holy customs and manner of life in the reformation of St. Teresa, and the privilege of the most intimate communication with her, were acknowledged and repaid by Fra Juan, not only with the rare example of his holy life and heavenly conversation, but also by giving both to St. Teresa and her daughters the spiritual nourishment of conferences, hearing confessions and directing them to the highest perfection. With this he began his intimate and life-long connection with St. Teresa as her spiritual son and master of herself and her daughters. He was the first confessor and spiritual director of the discalced Carmelites, fathers and sisters.

Every hindrance was now removed. The foundation of the first monastery of the barefooted Carmelites was not only possible but legal according to the constitution of the order,

and it was made with the full sanction of the general, to the great joy of those who were about to begin the reform of Carmel.

St. Teresa and her nuns, with their own hands, made the habit of the first friar of the reform, Fra Juan of St. Mathias. With that habit, but not wearing it, and with the means of saying mass, he left Valladolid for Duruelo. One of the workmen employed in repairing the monastery of the nuns was sent with him, because his service would be greatly needed in the ruined house which was to be the cradle of the reform of the friars.

When he was saying farewell to the nuns he said, before all the sisters, "Mother, as you are the cause of my undertaking this work for the service of God, ask him to give me his grace, that I may commence it for his glory, and on it and on myself bestow your holy blessing."

St. Teresa with her nuns wept tears of joy at the humility of the father and promised him their prayers. Then, falling on their knees, they begged him who had been their spiritual father and confessor, as the priest of the Lord, to bless them.

Fra Juan took leave of the saint and went to Duruelo to lay the foundations of the reform of the friars of Carmel. He had never seen the house of Duruelo, which was to be the first monastery of the order, until he went thither to

take possession of it in the autumn of 1568. Its poverty-stricken condition had an irresistible charm for him, and he entered it with joy in his heart, because he had found his true rest on earth. He began at once to put the house in order. First of all he made the church in a little porch of the house, which represented the stable of Bethlehem where our Lord was born. The only ornaments of the church were a number of crosses made of branches of trees, and as many skulls as crosses, which caused both horror and edification. The choir was in the garret over the inner chamber. It had a little roof sloping on both sides, so low at the ends that one had to kneel to go into the apartment. The window was a little hole in the roof which was opened and closed by a tile, so badly fitted that wind, rain and snow had free passage in. At both ends of the choir he built two little cells, so narrow and low that the dweller had to stretch out or kneel down in them, because they were at the ends of the garret. He spread a little straw in them to make them more like the stable of Bethlehem. He supplied stones for pillows. A cross and a skull were the precious furniture of these cells. Each one had its little window looking to the tabernacle, the most pleasing vista possible for the dwellers therein.

The domestic part of the monastery had less grandeur than the church and choir. The small

room under the choir was divided into two or three little cells, adorned with the same furniture as those already described. The little kitchen of the old house was divided into two, one being used for kitchen and the other for refectory. The furniture and kitchen-utensils of these departments were gay indeed. In the refectory he placed a piece of a rough board for a table. A broken pitcher and pumpkin-shells served as dishes. The kitchen boasted a couple of old pots which were used not very often.

Such was the whole monastery as our holy father prepared it for the cradle of our holy order. When the work was done, it was late in the evening. Fra Juan sent the workman who was with him to the village to beg for food, for there was none in the monastery. The people gave him some broken bread and with this they broke the fast of that day.

The greater part of the night, notwithstanding the labor of the day before, was spent by Fra Juan in prayer. In the morning, having prepared the altar, he said holy mass. The habit he had received from St. Teresa he laid on the altar and blessed it, and at the end of mass he put it on. He had no shoes nor stockings, nothing to protect his feet from the ground. He was as poor as man could well be; and in as poor a monastery as any in the world.

Outwardly and inwardly detached, he fell on his knees, and, with fervent thanksgiving commended himself and his work to our Lord through the intercession of his most holy mother, who had been his singular protectress from his childhood up to that day.

CHAPTER TENTH

Beginning of the Reform of the Friars. Change of Names. Life in Duruelo. Visit of St. Teresa. Monastery of Pastrana. Friars Remove From Duruelo to Manzera.

The house of Duruelo was to be the cradle of the reformed Carmel. While Fra Juan was making it ready, Fra Antonio Heredia paid a visit to St. Teresa in Valladolid. He gave to the saint an account of his preparations for the new life in Carmel, at which St. Teresa was greatly amused. In his zeal for punctuality, he had collected five hour-glasses—nothing else (Foundations, XVI-2). Fra Antonio awaited the arrival of the provincial at the house in Medina, where he was prior. At last the provincial came and in his presence Fra Antonio resigned his office and renounced the mitigations of the rule.

Taking with him one of the brothers, Fra Jose, not yet ordained priest, Fra Antonio reached Duruelo on the eve of the first Sunday in Advent, November 27, 1568. Fra Juan gladly welcomed them. The little community of three friars passed the night in fervent prayer. When the morning came, Fra Antonio and Fra John said Mass, and the three friars on their knees before the most holy sacrament, weep-

ing tears of joy, renewed the solemn vows of their profession, and renounced the mitigations of the rule sanctioned by Eugenius IV. They promised our Lord and his most blessed mother, the most holy Mary of Mount Carmel, to place themselves under the primitive rule of St. Albert, as corrected by Innocent IV, and to live it in its integrity until death. Then, following the custom introduced by our holy mother St. Teresa among the sisters, they changed their family names, to avoid every reminiscence of worldly honors. The choir-brother, Fra Joseph, became Joseph of Christ; Antonio Heredia, Antonio of Jesus; and Juan of St. Mathias, John of the Cross; the three of them made one Christ Jesus Crucified.

Soon afterwards, the provincial came to Duruelo, and made Fra Antonio prior, Fra John of the Cross superior and master of novices, and Fra Joseph of Christ porter and sacristan. Later on Fra Joseph of Christ fell away and returned to the old observance, but the two friars whom St. Teresa had chosen remained in Duruelo. In this way the reform was legally and peacefully begun, with the consent of the general of the order, and the co-operation of the provincial, Fra Alonso. In the records of the monastery the foundation is described as follows:

"In the year one thousand five hundred and sixty-eight, the twenty-eighth day of November,

this monastery of our Lady of Mount Carmel was founded in this place; in which monastery the primitive rule in its vigor, as delivered unto us by our first fathers, began to be observed, by the help of the Holy Ghost; the Father Doctor Fra Alonso Gonzalez being provincial of the province; the brothers Fra Antonio of Jesus, Fra John of the Cross and Fra Joseph of Christ, by the grace of God, began to live according to the rule in its strictness. The house and place were given to us by the owner, the noble Lord Don Rafael Mejia Velasquez; the most illustrious Lord Don Alonso de Mendoza, bishop of Avila, consenting to the foundation of the house."

This was the beginning of the reform of the friars, and it must never be forgotten that neither St. Teresa nor the friars of the reform ever complained of any laxity in the houses they left. The reform was not a reform of manners, but simply a restoration of the olden rule which in times past the sovereign pontiff had mitigated, but had never suppressed. The general of the order and the provincials in Spain never imagined at the time that the reform was to be regarded as a personal censure upon them and their brethren. It was lawful and perfect to live either under the primitive rule of St. Albert or under the rule mitigated by Eugenius IV. The intention of St. Teresa

was not to condemn the latter, but to restore the former under the same father-general of the order, and the same provincials throughout Spain.

The two fathers began to order their lives according to the primitive rule and to make for themselves certain constitutions based on the observances which St. John of the Cross had seen practiced by St. Teresa and her daughters in Valladolid, which are substantially the same as now embodied in the constitutions of the discalced Carmelite fathers of today.

The cell of St. John of the Cross in the new monastery was one of the corners at the end of the garret, having a little straw for his bed and a stone for his pillow. He assisted at matins at midnight, and after that he remained in prayer till morning. He was so absorbed that he did not feel the snow which filtered through the crevices of the tiles and covered him, as St. Teresa tells us in her book of the Foundations.

Though St. John of the Cross loved his cell, he was sent by his prior to preach in the country round. He had to go far away from the monastery, travelling always on foot. They wore no sandals in those days. His feet were bare, even in the depth of winter, and he walked over ground hardened by frost and covered with snow. As soon as his work was over, he

came back to his cell, without a morsel of food; and his cell was hardly more comfortable than the rough roads with stones and briers hidden in the snow, over which he had been travelling.

As no one in the little community could be spared as his companion in these journeys of charity, he called from Medina del Campo his brother Francis to be his companion on the roads. One day, after preaching in a parish church, St. John came down from the pulpit and left the church with his brother. The priest continued the mass, and when it was over, having learned that the preacher had departed for his convent, sent his servant to overtake him, and beg him to return and dine with him. The servant overtook St. John and delivered his message; but the preacher made his excuses and hastened to his monastery. His brother remonstrated with him, and said that it was an uncourteous treatment of the parish priest. St. John answered that he was doing the work of God, and did not wish to receive payment from man. When they came to a well by the wayside, St. John sat down and divided with his brother a little bread he had taken from the convent, and both dined on bread and water that day.

St. Teresa visited Duruelo in the year 1569. She found Fra Antonio sweeping at the door of the church. He was a grave and portly friar,

nearly sixty years of age, and had been forty years in the order.

"What has become of your dignity?" St. Teresa asked him.

He answered, paraphrasing the words of the prophet, "Cursed be the day wherein I had any" (Jer. XX-14).

St. Teresa was amazed by the poverty of the place and edified by the devotion of the friars and their faithful observance of the rule. But she was alarmed at their penances and austerities, which she regarded as excessive. She feared they might endanger the lives of those to whom she had entrusted the reform. She therefore spoke seriously on the subject to the friars, "who," she says, "having gifts I had not, made light of my advice." She gave thanks to the Lord, and in her humility confessed their ways to be safe (Foundations, XIV-2).

Such mortification and humility could not remain hidden. The people who dwelt round about came to the church and filled the two confessionals which were there; not poor people only, but the great noblemen of the neighborhood came to Duruelo, and entrusted their consciences to the friars, whose austere lives were a wonder to all. Among those who frequented the monastery was Don Luis de Toledo, a relative of the great Duke of Alva.

Two young men of exceptional talents applied for the habit of the reformed Carmel, and were received with great joy by the holy founders, Fra Antonio and St. John of the Cross. Our holy father, St. John, to whom God had communicated the fullness of the spirit of Carmel, began now to instruct his novices, not only by his heavenly doctrine, but specially by the example of his holy life. God had gifted him with such mastery, discretion and capacity that he filled his order with contemplative angels; and what he did for his own order by word of mouth and example, he has done for all since by his writings.

His uninterrupted sense of the presence of God, manifested in his exterior composure, his humble silence, his placid cheerfulness, his courteous and affable charity, earned for him the esteem of all. His novices especially had such a veneration and respect for him, that the least indications of his preferences were to them most sacred and weighty commands.

CHAPTER ELEVENTH

THE MONASTERY AT PASTRANA. TRANSLATION OF THE COMMUNITY FROM DURUELO TO MANZERA. NOVITIATE OF MANZERA. ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS GOES TO PASTRANA. COLLEGE OF ALCALA DE HENARES.

While Don Luis de Toledo was trying to induce the little community of Duruelo to leave the place and establish themselves in Manzera, where he had just built a new church, St. Teresa found means to establish another monastery of friars in Pastrana. She had secured, indeed, permission from the general of the order to found two monasteries of friars. Fra Antonio went to Pastrana, in July, 1569, leaving the house of Duruelo under the care of St. John of the Cross. St. Teresa was at this time founding the sixth convent of her nuns in Pastrana; she sent to Medina for Isabel of St. Jerome, and she requested the prior of the Carmelites there to send one of the fathers with her. The prior sent Fra Baltasar of Jesus, who had a great desire to quit the mitigation for the reform, but the prior knew nothing of it. On his arrival, Fra Baltasar immediately told St. Teresa his intention. She was glad because he was a zealous friar and a great preacher, famous in the order.

Two hermits of Tardon, in the Sierra Morena, had come to Pastrana to take the habit of our Lady of Mount Carmel; they had been won to the order by St. Teresa in Madrid. The postulants were eager to enter, and they begged St. Teresa to give them the habit. As Fra Pedro Muriel, the delegate of the provincial, was then in Pastrana, the matter was arranged. St. Teresa with her own hands gave the habit to the hermits, Mariano and Juan de la Miseria. Fra Baltasar preached a most moving sermon, and being already a Carmelite, made the change for himself. A few days later Fra Antonio arrived, and having now three friars under his jurisdiction, took formal possession of the monastery. He remained there about four months, training them in the discipline of Carmel. On his departure for Duruelo, he left Fra Baltasar of Jesus as his vicar, to govern the house.

The following year, 1570, the translation of the monastery of Duruelo to Manzera took place. Fra Antonio begged the provincial to honor the removal with his presence. Accordingly Fra Alonso not only came himself, but brought with him other friars, and all went in procession from Duruelo to Manzera. The provincial sang the mass, and Fra Antonio preached. St. John of the Cross took with him the two novices. One of them was Fra Pedro of the Angels, who rose to great sanctity, and

died in Valladolid in 1613; the other, Fra Juan Bautista, was made perfect in a short time and died in the monastery of La Roda in 1577.

Soon after our holy father St. John of the Cross and his companions came to Manzera, the fame of their holy life was spread through all the country, and at this news, many young men repaired to the new monastery and begged to be admitted into the novitiate. All were excellent vocations, and some of them highly learned men.

Among the latter was a doctor from the University of Salamanca, a great lawyer, and an able man; he begged to be received among the poor friars of Manzera, where his learning would not be held in great reverence, and where he found a master of novices who possessed a learning far more profitable than he had taught in the universities. One day, for the sake of saying something, or because the old Adam got the upper hand, the doctor from Salamanca observed that the library of the house was poorly furnished with certain books. The master of novices heard the remark, and ordered the cell of the doctor to be cleared of all books whatever, and then gave him a child's first book, or primer, and with the book he gave him a little rod, such as school-masters use in pointing out letters to young children. The learned doctor was to learn the letters like a child, as if he had

never been to school before. He did as he was told, and gave an account of his progress to the master of novices from day to day with tears of compunction and great humility of heart. He persevered in the order, was greatly respected, and eventually became provincial.

While Manzera prospered under the safe guidance of St. John of the Cross, Pastrana was in danger; and therefore, Fra Antonio, the prior of Manzera and superior also of Pastrana, determined to send thither his sub-prior and master of novices. Accordingly, in October, 1570, St. John of the Cross went to Pastrana to instruct the novices there; and Fra Pedro Fernandez, the apostolic visitor, made him vicar of the house in the absence of its prior. He took with him from Manzera Fra Peter of the Angels, whose prudent conduct and exemplary life would be of great service in the new house. The two friars travelled on foot, begging their bread. At night they rested in the poorest places, and when they found no house poor enough for their lodging, they slept on straw in barns and outhouses, carefully shunning all ease and comfort, keeping in mind his life of pain and travail who had no place to rest his head.

In the novitiate were fourteen men, four of whom were already professed. All were fervent, and given to great mortifications; but they

needed instruction, and some of them needed restraining, because they were inclined to excesses of penance unfitted for their state of life. Some of them had been friars of the mitigation, and others had left the world for the new Carmel; but there was no one in the house who had been trained under the first novice-master of the reform.

St. John of the Cross explained to them the intent and meaning of their vocation, the nature and requirements of the rule, the spirit hidden under its letter, and the great importance of the observances which were the several pathways, guards, and fences of the order and of their vocation. So persuasive was his language, and so winning his ways, that no one heard him unmoved. The little Carmel of Pastrana flourished, and was made a most fruitful vineyard of the Lord, by his holy life and heavenly doctrine.

In July of this year, 1570, and before St. John went to Pastrana, when St. Teresa was present at the profession of the two friars whom she had won in Madrid, it was resolved that a college should be founded for the order at Alcala de Henares, for the instruction of the friars. St. Teresa had leave to found only two convents, and these were already in existence. Application was therefore made to the apostolic visitor, who readily gave his consent, and with

the help of the duke of Pastrana, the prince Ruy Gomez, the college was built. It was inaugurated on the feast of All Saints by Fra Baltasar of Jesus, prior of Pastrana, who began thenceforth to preach in the city. His preaching was so powerful and attractive that the whole university crowded to hear him.

In the year 1571 the college of our Lady of Carmel passed into the hands of the novice-master, who had formed and fashioned Duruelo, Manzera and Pastrana. Although it was the house of studies it was subjected to the same training which had been established in the other houses. The example and teaching of St. John were not in vain. The students of the college, passing to and fro to the lectures of the university, calm, recollected, with downcast eyes, attracted the observation of the city, and won its respect. Regular discipline, fasting, watching and other mortifications humbled the pride of life, and made the understanding captive under the dominion of faith. St. John of the Cross, with unflagging watchfulness, encouraged them in their studies, setting devotion and piety on a higher level than learning. From his example and precept originated the saying still honored in the colleges of the order, "Religious and studious, but religious above all."

While the college in Alcala was growing, the novitiate at Pastrana fell into disorder again. Fra Angel of Gabriel, newly-made priest, full

of zeal, fervent and mortified, but not gifted with the discretion required in a master of novices, begun to make changes and disturb the order of the house. Fra Antonio of Jesus and other grave fathers consulted together and agreed that there was but one help for it, to send the first novice-master of Carmel there at once. They felt that his work in Alcala was done and well done. The college was sound and healthy. But even if he had not finished his work there, they must send him to Pastrana, because that was now the novitiate of the order. It was therefore of the highest importance to bring it again to its former state. St. John of the Cross left Alcala for Pastrana to undo the work of the entire year, and to bring back into the true pathways of the new Carmel the whole monastery; for the professed fathers also had been led astray. The saint arrived in Pastrana at the beginning of the year 1572, and began his work gently and tenderly. In the first place he put an end to the public humiliations and the singular penances which were practiced in the house. He restored the monastery to the spirit of the rule and observance of those constitutions which he and Fra Antonio had agreed upon in the beginning when they were together in Duruelo. He showed the novices that their spirit was peculiar, and that they were not to adopt the practices even of the greatest saints, if they were not suited to their vocation. Their

chief work was prayer and meditation, "dwelling alone in the forest, in the midst of Carmel," away from the noise of men, bent on keeping the rule. Each order in Holy Church has its peculiar work and spirit; and confusion alone, and ruin of vocations, result from the disorderly impulse which leads one man to do the work of another.

CHAPTER TWELFTH

St. Teresa Calls St. John of the Cross to Avila. Reformation of the Monastery. His Trances.

While St. John of the Cross was in Alcala de Henares, St. Teresa was sent by the apostolic visitor, Fra Pedro Hernandez of the order of St. Dominic, to Avila as prioress of the monastery of the Incarnation. Notwithstanding the opposition of the nuns, constrained by her vow of obedience the saint entered and took possession of the office of prioress in October, 1571, and, winning by degrees the affection of the discontented nuns, brought the monastery to a state of regularity and fervor. Meanwhile St. John of the Cross had returned from Alcala to Pastrana, and had reformed that monastery, restoring it to the true pathways of the new Carmel. St. Teresa, in order to do her work more surely and leave durable traces of her presence in the convent of the Incarnation, where she had received the habit of Carmel and made her profession, and where she had enjoyed most wonderful visions and revelations, asked the visitor for St. John of the Cross as confessor of the monastery. The visitor assented gladly, and the saint came without delay, bringing with him another friar, German of St.

Mathias, as his companion. The visitor lodged them in a small house close to the monastery of the Incarnation where they could live in peace. This was in the spring of 1572.

The great sanctity of St. John of the Cross, hitherto known to few, began to be spoken of outside the order. The nuns of the Incarnation gave him their confidence without reserve and in obedience to him changed the order of their lives.

St. Teresa had put an end to the great distractions which were the result of too many visits to the monastery by seculars, and St. John of the Cross made the work perfect by stopping, directly and indirectly, confessions of the nuns to priests who were without the courage and will to correct the laxity resulting from frequent resort to the parlors. St. John dealt with the nuns gently and tenderly, but with constant firmness, and the community under the government of St. Teresa, though not keeping the rule which the prioress and the two confessors observed, became most observant and recollected, as we can see by a letter of St. Teresa to her sister Dona Juana, written 27 September, 1572, in which the saint says, "The barefooted friar who is confessor here is doing great things. He is Fra John of the Cross."

God promoted the work by giving to the saint many supernatural gifts; among others, the

gift of miracles. Soon after he came to the Incarnation, one of the nuns, Dona Maria de Yera, fell into a sudden and dangerous illness, and before her danger was suspected by the nuns, became insensible. They sent for St. John of the Cross to administer the last sacraments. But before he entered the monastery the nun was dead, to the extreme grief of her sisters, one of whom, in the bitterness of her sorrow, reproached the saint as if he were to be blamed, saying, "Is this the way you take care of your children? This one has died without confession."

The holy man made no answer, but turned back and went straight to the church, where before the most holy sacrament he poured out his soul, begging humbly for help. After a considerable time the nuns sent him word saying that the sister was restored to life. Whereupon he left the church and on the way met the nun who had spoken to him before.

"My child," he asked, "are you satisfied?"

He then went to the infirmary, heard the confession of the nun who had been restored to life, and gave her the last sacraments. When the saint had done for her all that could be done, God took her to himself.

St. John was kind to these poor nuns in every way, and they were much to be pitied, for the monastery was very large and very poor. The

nuns were more than a hundred in number and often in distress, wanting both food and raiment. One day, seeing a nun in a habit utterly unsuited to her, St. John went out and begged enough to supply her with another, for the monastery was too poor to do so. In many ways he thus manifested his compassion for their material distress.

St. Teresa tells us how, in 1573, St. John of the Cross mortified her in the very act of giving her holy communion. St. Teresa liked to receive large hosts, and had said so to St. John of the Cross. But he, intent on teaching perfect detachment, on that day divided one host between the foundress and one of the nuns, not because there was a scarcity of hosts, but, says the saint, "because he wished to mortify me."

One of the sisters, Beatriz of Jesus, who later became a barefooted nun, went to the parlor of the Incarnation on Trinity Sunday with a message to the prioress. To her great amazement, she saw St. Teresa raised in the air, where she remained unconscious of the messenger's presence. Sister Beatriz withdrew and called other nuns who became witnesses of the same marvel. On the other side of the grating they discovered St. John of the Cross, also raised above the ground in the same way. The mystery was explained to them afterwards. The two saints had begun speaking of the Most Blessed Trinity, and had fallen into a trance together.

St. Teresa often said it was impossible for any one to speak of God to St. John of the Cross, because either he or the other fell into a trance.

On another occasion, when the two saints were conversing together, he rose from his seat, trying to hide from her what was coming on; and when she asked him if it was the beginning of a trance, he said simply, "I think it is."

Calmly and quietly he did his work among the nuns, who had hitherto been indifferently governed. Although they were very many and the house was very poor, by degrees they were brought back to more regular observance. The world outside became conscious of the change within, and felt that the saints were responsible for it. In a letter to Philip II, St. Teresa gives the credit to St. John of the Cross. "The city is amazed," she says, "at the exceedingly great good he has done here, and people take him for a saint; and in my opinion he is one, and has been one all his life" (Lett. 170, to Philip II, 4 Dec., 1577).

CHAPTER THIRTEENTH

ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS IS SOUGHT BY OTHER COMMUNITIES FOR SPIRITUAL DIRECTION. EXORCISM OF A NUN. CONVERSION OF A DELUDED RELIGIOUS. AND OF OTHER PERSONS.

St. John of the Cross was now sought for throughout Avila for his great gift of spiritual direction. Troubled consciences, unquiet scruples, all yielded before him; and those whom melancholy or delusions had led astray, were brought back to the true ways of the spirit. Religious houses sent for him, and were by him wonderfully sustained; for his words were words of heavenly wisdom, not found in the land of those who live a pleasant life.

There was at that time in one of the monasteries of Avila a poor nun round whom satan had thrown his net. Her state was most pitiable, and her distress almost unbearable. She was tempted by the spirit of blasphemy, doubt and uncleanness. St. John of the Cross was sent to the monastery, and she revealed to him the whole story of her dismal temptations. He discerned the source of her troubles and applied remedies. She on her part accepted them and was delivered from her distress. But no sooner had the saint left her than the evil spirit re-

turned to the assault. Disguised in the likeness of St. John of the Cross, he sent for the nun to come to the confessional, and there he poisoned her with his deadly teachings. Next day the saint himself came and heard the confession of the poor nun, who had been more at ease, she said, because she had obeyed his directions given the night before, and made less resistance to the temptations by which she was tormented. The servant of God recognized the deceit of the tempter, and told her that he had not given her any directions the day before, nor had he been near the monastery. He then gave her certain instructions in writing, which he said she was carefully to observe; and went his way. Immediately afterwards the nun received another letter, containing further instructions, but of a different kind. They were in the handwriting of the saint and signed with his name. So at least it appeared to the nun. The letter said that the former instructions required some correction, because they demanded of her more vigilance than was fitting for her state; that a certain degree of liberty was necessary to avoid scruples and secure greater quiet of conscience. The handwriting and signature of the saint were counterfeited so skillfully that the saint himself, when he saw them, admitted them to be his; though he recognized the forgery in the teaching, which was satan's, not his. Seeing now that the poor nun was a puppet in the

hands of the evil one, the saint had recourse to the exorcisms of Holy Church, and thereby delivered her from the great perils she was in.

There was in another monastery a nun who amazed everybody with her learning. She could speak many languages, and was wonderfully versed in arts and sciences. She could dispute in theology with the most learned theologian; her knowledge was so wonderful that people began to think her science was infused. Great doctors regarded her with reverence, for they were afraid of being guilty of rash judgment. But as all that is singular in religion is usually to be suspected, her superiors became uneasy about her, and resolved to have her spirit tested by St. John of the Cross. He was not willing at first to undertake the task; his sole desire was to be left alone in his poor cottage near the monastery of the Incarnation, and to be forgotten of men.

The repeated entreaties of her superiors constrained him, and yielding to an impulse of the Holy Spirit he at last consented to see the nun. Before doing so he prepared himself by earnest prayer and penance, his usual armor, and then, committing the issue to the Lord, he went to the monastery. The nun came to the parlor, where the saint was waiting for her; but the moment she saw him she began to quake with sudden fear. Her tongue, usually so fluent, re-

fused its office. She could speak no language but her own and all her knowledge had departed from her. Her superiors, seeing this, and now fully persuaded that she was in the toils of the devil and a source of constant danger to the religious round her, begged the saint to perfect the work he had begun. Compassionating the poor soul before him, he consented to their request, and exorcised the nun. The dumb spirit who had taken possession of her had to give up its prey and reveal the whole story of the long possession.

The unhappy nun from her earliest years had been vain and foolish and fond of human applause. The wicked spirit took advantage of her lightness, appeared before her and, though she did not know at the time what the vision meant, fascinated her imagination with his evil beauty. She herself was naturally quick, lively, and witty; but, conscious of her ignorance and ashamed of it, she coveted knowledge. This the devil promised her, on the condition that she would promise to become his bride. The foolish girl, now in the power of the evil one, became more and more careless about her soul, and at last begun to hate God and his service, and to wish others also might do so.

How she came to the monastery is not known; perhaps the devil tempted her for his own ends to feign a vocation she had not. Anyhow the

nuns received her with joy, for her fame was great and she was admired by the people. For a long time the nuns among whom she lived had no suspicion of the dangers they had incurred, but now the wiles of the enemy were discovered, and the evil spirits confessed their hateful presence. St. John spoke to the nun of the infinite mercy of God and enlightened her mind while appealing to her better self. She on her part promised to do all in her power to free herself from the dominion of the devil.

St. John returned to the monastery of the Incarnation, but immediately he was inwardly advised by the Holy Spirit to return to the monastery where the possessed nun lived. The devil had knocked at the door of the monastery in the disguise of St. John of the Cross and asked to see the nun in the parlor. He said he had something to tell her which he had forgotten before. The portress opened the door and allowed him to enter. The nun came to the parlor, where she found the evil one, who had put on the likeness of St. John of the Cross. He spoke to her of the grievous nature of her sins, the impossibility of forgiveness, and the power of the devil to compel her to continue in his service. The poor nun was utterly cast down. Her distress was all the greater because a few hours before St. John of the Cross had spoken to her of the goodness and mercy of God and

had encouraged her to do works of penance, trusting in God's infinite love for men.

St. John arrived at the monastery and asked to see the nun. The portress answered that it was not possible, because she was at the moment in the parlor with St. John of the Cross.

"How can that be!" said the holy man, "I am John of the Cross, and the one who is there can not be he."

The portress opened the door and allowed him to enter.

He went straight to the parlor and the moment he came in the evil spirit vanished.

The portress meanwhile had told the story to some of the nuns and they hurried to the parlor where they saw nothing but the nun bitterly weeping and in great distress of mind.

The saint exorcised her and commanded the evil spirits, in the name of God, not only to confess how they came to have such power over the poor soul, but also to tell him the time of their possession and the number of the wicked spirits that dwelt in her.

To the first question they answered that when the nun was only six years of age they entered into an agreement with her in writing and signed by her own blood; to the second, that they were three legions of evil spirits, and that Lucifer was the chief among them.

Then the servant of God commanded in the name of God that Lucifer should present him-

self at once. He obeyed, manifesting his presence by the grimaces and terrible words of the possessed nun. She became so ferocious and terrific that the other nuns ran away through fear. And not only the nuns, but even the companion of the holy father was terribly frightened; but the saint encouraged him, saying not to fear for he was a minister of God.

Reassured by him, the nuns and certain seculars returned to the room. Then St. John commanded the evil spirits to give up their prey and hand over the document of their infamous agreement.

All this was done. In the presence of the community the devil hurled down at the feet of the prioress the bill signed by the unhappy nun.

St. John's power over evil spirits caused the prioress of Medina del Campo to beg St. Teresa to send him thither. There was a nun in that house so grievously afflicted with melancholy that her sisters were afraid that her disease was not natural. St. John of the Cross went there from the monastery of the Incarnation, and having spoken to the nun, pronounced her disorder akin to madness. In the course of time his decision was found to be true. St. Teresa wrote a letter to the prioress, Ines of Jesus, her cousin, saying, "I send you Fra John of the Cross to whom God has given grace to drive evil spirits away. He has now, here in

Avila, put to flight three legions of devils, whom in the name of God he commanded to tell their number, and he was obeyed on the instant."

Not only the evil spirits, but the world also was subject to his power. There was in Avila a young lady, beautiful, wealthy, and high-born, whose daily life was a scandal. The young men of the city, captivated by her beauty and manners, flocked round her whenever they could, to the great terror of her friends and relatives, who were alarmed at the freedom of her life and jealous of her honor. They implored her to go to confession to St. John of the Cross. It was their only hope of saving her from imminent ruin. But she refused to go near a confessor who would not allow her to continue her amusements. Her friends persisted and at last she consented to make her confession to the man of God. She went to the church and to the confessional, out of which she hardly expected to come forth alive, so much did she fear him. For she knew nothing of him but his austerities and unworldly life, so unlike her own. He heard her confession and spoke so gently to her that she was seized with amazement and resolved to return to the same confessional. She did so and changed her life, putting aside her rich dresses, avoiding idle company and light amusements, doing penance and wearing sack-

cloth. Her conversion was a joy to the whole city, and the rest of her life edified her neighbors more than her former excesses had offended them.

Two other conversions are recorded, both wonderful and effectual, wrought by him while he was confessor of the nuns of the Incarnation in Avila.

One was of a nun who had become a scandal in the city. She had set aside the obligations of her state and was living in permanent and sacrilegious adultery. The most merciful God brought her to the feet of our holy father, who softened her heart and converted her so perfectly that her heart was conquered and restored to her master and spouse Jesus Christ. She detested her wickedness, hated sin and avoided the occasion of it, giving satisfaction to the public by her new and exemplary life. Her sacrilegious accomplice resented this change, and, full of hatred against the saint, waited one evening at the door of the monastery of the Incarnation, where the saint was hearing the confessions of the sisters. When he came out, the assassin fell upon him and with a stick gave him such terrible blows that St. John fell on the ground badly wounded, but very happy to suffer something for the love of God. He used to say afterwards that never in his life was he so happy as when beaten so cruelly by that man,

because he suffered for God and for having delivered a soul from mortal sin.

The other conversion was that of a young lady of a noble house in Avila, with great gifts of mind and body. She was a penitent of the saint and lived near the monastery of the Incarnation. Satan besieged her with special malignity and in the end brought her to the very brink of ruin. One night, as the servant of God was in prayer in his house, he was surprised by the sudden appearance of a woman. He trembled with fear and signed himself with the sign of the cross for he believed that satan himself stood before him. The miserable girl, divining his thoughts, told him he need not be afraid; it was she herself, his penitent, and not the devil, who had come into the room. She told him that she had been tempted sorely and that she had resolved to fight no longer. The holy man heard her with horror, and, lifting up his eyes to heaven, full of the most compassionate zeal, he spoke to the miserable woman of the terrible judgment of God on sinners and the inevitable penalties which awaited her. She was moved at last and, bursting into tears of true contrition, fell upon her knees and cried to God for pardon. He then sent her away as quickly as he could, reserving for another time and a more fitting place her perfect reconciliation with God.

CHAPTER FOURTEENTH

Friars of the Mitigation Oppose the Reform. St. John of the Cross Made a Prisoner. He is Carried to Toledo.

In the course of his fifth year in Avila, in 1576, a most troublesome incident befel St. John of the Cross which it would be a relief not to mention if it were not precisely the most precious gem in the halo of sanctity, venerated by Holy Church as the story of his life. This is the reason given by St. Teresa for speaking of it in many parts of her writings. Keeping in mind the good intentions which actuated the prelates of the observance and the conclusion arrived at by the general and commissary that the discalced fathers were obstinate and rebellious, the reader will see how the facts in the case display the holiness of St. John of the Cross and redound to the glory of the entire order of Carmel.

Before St. Teresa's term of office as prioress of the monastery of the Incarnation in Avila came to an end, and while St. John of the Cross was still stationed there, the friars of the mitigation struck their first blow at the reform of Carmel. In the year 1575 the general chapter of the order was assembled in Piacenza, in the duchy of Parma. That memorable chapter de-

creed the suppression throughout Spain of all monasteries of friars which had not been founded with the sanction of the general. Every one who was not willing to accept this decree was to be regarded as a rebel and punished as such. This affected six or seven houses of the reform which had been founded with sanction of the nuncio. Only two, the house at Duruelo later removed to Manzera, and the house at Pastrana, had been founded with the permission of the general.

Fra Jerome Tostado, a shrewd and courageous Portuguese friar, was appointed visitor of Spain and charged with the execution of this decree. After his instructions were given to him he set our for Spain, making no haste, but advancing slowly and deliberately to do his work. Towards the end of 1575 the prior of the Carmelites in Avila, acting under instructions from Fra Jerome Tostado, removed St. John of the Cross and Fra German of St. Mathias from the chaplaincy of the monastery of the Incarnation, "to the exceeding great scandal of the city," writes St. Teresa. The nuncio was appealed to, and he ordered them to be brought back, at the same time forbidding the friars of the mitigation to hear confessions of the nuns or even to say mass in that monastery.

The nuncio, Monsignor Ormaneto, died in 1577. This was an occasion of great grief to

the friars of the reform, for he had been faithful and constant in their defense. His successor, Monsignor Siega, was unfriendly to them, considering them rebellions innovators bent on the ruin of the order. His opinion was due to men interested or deceived, who gained his confidence and led him to distrust St. Teresa herself, representing her to be a restless and dissatisfied nun. The nuncio believed there was some truth at least in these miserable accusations, and his anger was not lessened when the "restless woman," as he once called St. Teresa, was elected prioress of the Incarnation by fifty-five nuns against forty-four who were in favor of Dona Ana of Toledo, one of the household. The fifty-five who elected St. Teresa were excommunicated by the provincial. They submitted to the prioress who had been elected by the minority and she was confirmed by the vicar of the general, Fra Jerome Tostado. He sent Fra Fernando Maldonado, prior of Toledo, to absolve them and make peace in the house.

The prior had other instructions also. He was to detach St. John of the Cross from the reform, and failing that, to put him in prison as a disobedient friar.

Father Fernando Maldonado began by trying to persuade the saint to return to the old observance which he had abandoned nine years before. He said the reform was a scandal in

itself, a slur on the good name of the order and a life full of spiritual dangers because it was new. St. John could not be moved. Then Fra Fernando made up his mind to use force and take him with him to prison in Toledo where he was prior.

Somehow or other this resolution to use violence became known and several of the chief men in Avila, with certain relatives of the nuns, kept watch round the poor cottage of the two friars. Father Maldonado remained quiet and waited till by degrees the watch was discontinued. Thereupon, on the night of 3 December, he went with a band of armed men to the cottage and, although the two friars neither resisted nor wished to offer any resistance, they were bound and gagged. Father Maldonado took them for the night to the friars' monastery, but before shutting them in their cells he had them severely scourged as rebel children of their mother. We have this on the authority of St. Teresa's letter to the prioress of Seville, written 10 December, 1577. Next morning the prior sent for St. John of the Cross, desiring to obtain some information from him. The saint, guarded by his jailers, was led into the place where the prior was making his thanksgiving after mass and was left there. He, seeing the door open, went out of the house to secure certain papers he had left behind in his

little cottage. When his absence was observed some of the friars followed him in all haste. They found him in the house, but before they reached there the saint had destroyed the papers.

Fra German of St. Mathias was transferred to Moralejas. In the letter of St. Teresa to the prioress of Seville, referred to above, she says, "The prior of Avila has taken Fra German to St. Paul's, Moralejas. . . . They say that on the road blood flowed from his mouth."

St. John of the Cross was destined for Toledo. In order to avoid notice by the people of Avila, Father Maldonado made the saint change his habit and cover his feet, as if he were a friar of the old observance. The friar to whose keeping the saint was committed hated the reform and showed it by treating his prisoner harshly while on the road. A secular in the party was more compassionate and determined to help St. John to escape. He found opportunity of making his resolution known to the prisoner, but the only answer he got from the saint was that the friar in charge did not treat him half so harshly as he deserved. St. John begged him therefore not to trouble himself further about him. The layman was not easily dissuaded. When they came to the inn where they were to lodge for the night, he went to the host and having told him what he had observed, said he believed the pris-

oner to be a great saint and he wished to set him free. The inn-keeper entered into the plan, and told St. John of the Cross means of escape would be found during the night. It was all in vain. The holy man told him, as he had told the other, that he had no wish to escape. He was a willing prisoner. Thus he arrived in Toledo, calm and joyous of heart, for he was reaping the fruits of many years of self-discipline.

The seizure of the two friars filled Avila with dismay, but nobody could give any help. St. Teresa was at this time in her own monastery of St. Joseph in that city; herself in disgrace, but not disheartened. Unable to learn where the prisoners were hidden by their persecutors, she wrote at once to the king, Philip II, begging for help. "I would rather," she said, "he were in the hands of the Moors, for they perhaps would be more merciful. And this friar, who is so great a servant of God, is so enfeebled by his great sufferings that I fear for his life."

His judges were waiting for him in the monastery of the Incarnation of the old observance. They were angry, not just, judges and their passion and prejudice prevailed. They were satisfied that the prisoner was guilty before they heard his defence.

CHAPTER FIFTEENTH

Trial and Imprisonment. Hardships in the Prison. Light in the Cell. Vision of Our Lady. Preparations to Escape.

According to the orders of the visitor general and the acts of the general chapter, St. John of the Cross was received in Toledo as a fugitive and contumacious friar. The next day he appeared before his judges, friars of the old observance, empowered by the vicar of the general in Spain to try him.

The acts of the general chapter held in Piacenza were produced. He was asked to return to the observance quitted by him nine years before. His judges promised not only to forgive and forget the past, but also to treat him with great honor and raise him to high offices in the order. If he refused to submit he would be regarded as a rebellious friar, they said, and subjected to the penalties with which all religious orders punish contumacious children.

Saint John heard them patiently and then with great humility replied that it was impossible for him to do what they required of him. The reform to which he belonged was lawfully established, with the consent of the general, by the visitors apostolic and the nuncio of His

Holiness; he was bound to persevere, therefore, under obedience to higher authority, for the authority of the Pope is greater than that of the general chapter. He said he was in their power and was ready and willing to accept any punishment they wished to give him, although, since his superior was Fra Jerome of the Mother of God, he was not legally subject to their jurisdiction.

The friars of the mitigation thought they were within their own right. They believed they were justified in restraining St. John of the Cross under authority of the general. The new nuncio also favored them, for he wished, as much as they did, to crush the reform. They had him in their power now, and they believed they had the right to chastise him as a rebellious friar.

The servant of God was helpless and submitted humbly to the sentence pronounced on him by men who had no jurisdiction over him. He had prayed for suffering, and his prayer was being heard.

They gave him for a prison a small closet, not quite six feet wide and less than ten feet in length, at the end of a room in which guests of distinction were usually lodged. It was close and dark, without any window. Its scanty light came through a loophole not three inches wide, in the wall near the roof. To read his

breviary the prisoner had to stand on a bench and hold a book up under the light, which could be had only for a short time during the day when the sun shone in the corridor of the house.

The door of this closet was padlocked. He could never leave it without the jailer's permission. Afterwards when the friars heard of the escape of his fellow-sufferer, Fra German of St. Mathias, from the monastery of Moralejas, the door of the room to which the closet belonged was also locked. They were determined to keep him safely, because they considered him, as in truth he was, the chief pillar of the hated reform.

No one, except the friar who acted as jailer, was allowed to speak to him or even see him. In the evenings he was led to the refectory at the time of collation and there, on the floor, he had to take his food, which was generally bread and water. When the meal was over, the prior was accustomed to rebuke him severely, upbraiding him as a reformer of others when he needed reformation himself, and calling attention of the community to him as to one who had set himself up to teach them before he had himself been taught.

When the prior ceased to speak the saint bared his shoulders to receive the public discipline inflicted on friars guilty of great offences. It is the heaviest penance which religious in-

flict as the penalty of disgraceful deeds. St. John of the Cross, walking in the footsteps of his Master, bowed his head and submitted to the terrible scourging, which was so unsparingly administered that his shoulders bore the mark of it for the rest of his days. He received it from the hands of God, who had the right to scourge him, and neither then nor afterwards did he ever complain of the friars, not even among his own brethren of the reform, who knew the whole story. He would never allow any one at any time to blame the friars of Toledo.

At first they led him to the refectory every night. He longed for the evening, that he might submit once more to the torture. But his judges grew weary in time, and they sent for him only thrice in the week. This continued for some weeks; then only on Fridays. Later, they spared him even on Fridays, and left him for weeks unmolested in his cell. This was to him a fresh grief. He complained to his jailer, asking why he had been forgotten and deprived of his only consolation.

He was kept in prison more than eight months, during which time he was never allowed to change his clothes. He had to wear the habit of the mitigation which had been given him in Avila when he was made prisoner. This was a perpetual penance to him. His woolen

tunic underneath must have been saturated with blood, and frightfully soiled. But the friars were blind to their own cruelty. When he went out of the prison at last, he had become a burden even to himself.

To add to his sorrows, the friars of the observance would meet together in the room to which his cell belonged, and there they discussed the affairs of the reform. They spoke of the resolution of the nuncio, Monsignor Siega, to crush the reform, and narrated the strange charges brought against St. Teresa herself, of whom more evil was said than of Luther. They said the Visitor Jerome Gratian and other heads of the reform were already imprisoned, and that not only the reform was to be abolished, but that its founders and all those who had anything to do with it were to be disgraced forever. All this was gall and wormwood to St. John, for he knew nothing of the state of his brethren. He therefore bewailed his own sins and imperfections which, in his humility, he considered the cause of the great ruin which had been wrought in Carmel.

It was impossible for him to communicate with anybody. He was cut off from the rest of the world; no one knew where he was. As far as possible they also deprived him of the consolation of religion. It was with difficulty he could say his office. He was not allowed to say mass.

If he had gone to the Carthusians, as he purposed at the beginning of his priesthood, he could have served God in peace and quietness. But here God had thrown him into the crucible to burn away the dross, to purify the spirit, and bring it to himself. In all these trials, in the depths of his sufferings, his patience never failed him. It was in this prison he composed several wonderful hymns, which afterwards he most admirably explained.

His bodily pains may be, perhaps, comprehended, but the spiritual sufferings by which his soul was raised on high, are unutterable. He was drawn in beneath the deep waters and hidden from the eyes of men bodily and spiritually, so that none could comfort him.

But God did not forsake his servant. One night the friar, who kept him, went as usual to see that his prisoner was safe, and witnessed a heavenly light with which the cell was flooded. He did not stop to consider it, but hurried to the prior, thinking some one in the house had keys to open the doors of the prison. The prior at once went with two religious to the prison, but on entering the room through which the prison was approached, the light vanished. The prior entered the cell but, finding no light, went away, thinking it was some illusion of the jailer.

St. John at a later time told one of his brethren that the heavenly light which God so merci-

fully sent him, lasted the whole night and filled his soul with joy. It made the night pass away as if it were but a moment.

When his imprisonment was drawing to its close, he heard our Lord say to him, "John, I am here; be not afraid. I will set thee free."

On the eve of the Assumption of our Lady, 1587, when he had been eight months in prison, the prior came suddenly with two of the friars. He found the saint on his knees in prayer. St. John thought it was only the jailer and continued in prayer, but the prior touched him rudely and asked him why he had not stood up to receive him. The prior honestly believed his not rising up was an act of disrespect and was greatly displeased. The servant of God begged to be forgiven so simply and so humbly that the prior was softened for a moment and asked him what he was thinking of.

St. John of the Cross answered, "I was thinking that tomorrow is the feast of the Assumption of our Lady, and that it would be a great joy to me if I could say mass."

The prior turned his back saying, "Not in my time," and went his way.

The saint was left alone in his sorrow, because next day he was neither to say nor hear mass. But during the night that followed the day of the Assumption, our Blessed Lady came to his cell, making it radiant in the soft light

of her presence, and said to him, "My son, have patience, thy trials are nearly over; thou shalt leave the prison, say mass, and be glad."

His heart dilated at these words and he began to consider how he was to make his escape. He knew that his jailers would not release him, and he could not deliver himself. In this perplexity, but confident that an escape was possible, he continued for a day or two, and then our Lord himself appeared to him and bade him to be of good cheer, for he who enabled the Prophet Eliseus to divide the waters of the Jordan with the mantle of Elias and cross the river, would, without any difficulty, deliver him out of the hands of his tormentors.

Believing that his deliverance was nigh, he took heart and waited, but he was still unable to understand how it was to be effected. Again our Lady appeared to him and in a vision showed to him a window of the monastery from which the Tagus could be seen. He was to descend from that window, she said, and she would save him from all danger. As he had never been in the monastery except as a prisoner, he knew nothing of the arrangements of the house. He would not have been able to find his way to that window even by day-light, still less in the darkness of the night. But our Lord prepared things quietly. The ordinary jailer who had been so harsh was called for some

other work, and a friar from Valladolid, of a more tender heart, was made his guardian. This friar, Fra John of St. Mary, touched by the patience and silence of the prisoner, became persuaded that he was a great saint. He therefore was as kind to him as he could be, and tried in every way to soften the rigors of his prison. When the fathers were at recreation or resting in the heat of the day, he would take St. John out of his cell and allow him to walk up and down the room to which it belonged.

And then he gave him greater freedom and allowed him to enter the corridor and even to look out of the windows. Thus it was that he discovered the window seen in the vision.

He had been treated by his jailer with all the kindness in his power, and now, knowing that he was to leave him, he thanked him for his kindness and asked him to forgive all the trouble he had caused. He then gave him a crucifix which the friars had not taken from him. The cross was made of some rare wood on which the instruments of the passion were admirably figured, and the image of our Lord was of bronze. The saint had worn it under his scapular near his heart, and told his jailer that he prized it highly himself, not for the workmanship, but because it had been given to him by a most saintly person in whose possession it

had been for some time. He did not say that it was the gift, as it is believed, of St. Teresa herself, when he was the confessor of the nuns of the Incarnation, because at that time the name of St. Teresa was hateful in the ears of the fathers of the mitigation and this good friar from Valladolid was probably under the same misconception.

CHAPTER SIXTEENTH

ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS ESCAPES FROM THE PRISON. TAKES REFUGE IN THE MONASTERY OF ST. JOSEPH. IS PROTECTED BY DON PEDRO GONZALO DE MENDOZA.

When the servant of God saw the window which had been shown him in vision he knew the time had come for his escape. That night when his jailer, after giving him supper, went out of the cell for some water, St. John loosened the staple of the padlock on his door. He was further favored by the jailer's forgetting that night to take away the lamp.

Late in the evening the provincial, with some other religious, came unexpectedly to the monastery and two of them were lodged in the room which gave access to the prison of St. John. They continued for a long time conversing together.

Meanwhile St. John was making preparations. He tore the two cloaks which constituted his bedding into strips, and tied them together that they might serve him for a rope. After this he spent the rest of the time in fervent prayer.

When he observed that the friars were sleeping soundly, about two o'clock in the morning,

he took the iron lamp and the rope he had made and, imploring our Lady's help, shook the door until the loosened staple gave way.

The noise disturbed the sleeping friars, who cried out, "Who is there!"

He made no answer and they, knowing nothing of his presence, fell asleep again. He waited awhile, but a voice within him urged, "Be quick!" and when the two friars were again sound asleep, he left the cell and, crossing the room, went to the corridor and from there straight to the window which he had seen in the vision.

The window had a wooden parapet, the lower part of which was not joined to the brickwork. He inserted the iron rod of the lamp into the opening and fastened the rope to it. Then, commending himself to God and his most holy mother, he let himself down in the darkness to a place he had never seen in his life.

The rope was much too short; it did not reach half-way to the ground, but he, praying for help, let the rope go, and fell.

He was neither stunned nor hurt, although he fell from a considerable height, and onto loose stones, heaped there for the building of the church of the monastery.

He was still within the precincts of the monastery, and the night was dark. He had left one prison to find himself in another, of which

he knew nothing. As his eyes grew accustomed to the darkness, he saw a dog gnawing some bones. He went up to the dog and frightened him away, meaning to follow him and find a way out. The dog leaped over the wall which separated the monastery of the friars from a courtyard of the Franciscan nuns. This courtyard was behind the church and its walls were high.

The saint was extremely weak from his long imprisonment and it was impossible for him to climb over the wall. In his distress he prayed again to our Blessed Lady for help, and somehow or other, he knew not how, he reached the top of the wall and let himself down on the other side.

He was now freed from his prison, but when he had circled the courtyard of the nuns, he found there was no way out. Discovery in such a place would be worse than in any other. He was plunged into the depths of misery by his plight. He went again round the court, but could find no outlet. Having exhausted human means, he prayed that he who had begun to deliver him would be pleased to finish his work.

While still praying for help he saw a wonderful light out of which came a voice, saying, "Follow me."

He obeyed. The light moved before him towards the highest part of the wall, and then, he knew not how, he found himself on the summit

of it, without effort or fatigue. He descended into the street and the light vanished.

It had been so brilliant that for two or three days afterwards his eyes were weak, as if he had been looking at the midday sun.

He had never before been in Toledo and did not know where to go; but, giving hearty thanks to our Lord for his miraculous escape, he took shelter in the porch of a large house, which had been left open. When the day began to break he saw a woman making ready her wares for the market and asked her the way to the monastery of the barefooted Carmelites, a monastery founded by St. Teresa in 1568.

The people who were abroad at that hour looked at him with amazement as he walked through the streets. He had on an old and worn habit and no mantle. His biographer says his appearance was rather that of a madman than a religious of Carmel.

He knocked at the door of the monastery at about five o'clock in the morning. Mother Leonor of Jesus, who was the turner at that time, answered, and the saint said, "Daughter, I am Fra John of the Cross. Last night I escaped from prison. Tell the mother prioress that I am here."

The astonished sister did not lose time in delivering her message. The news of his escape ran through the monastery in an instant, and

made all the religious glad. He had been eight months close to them, and yet none of them had known where he was.

At the moment of St. John's arrival at the door of the monastery, one of the sisters, Anne of the Mother of God, who had been ill for some time, thought herself to be in serious danger and asked for the confessor of the house. St. John had come in time to attend to her wants and the confessor was not disturbed. Weak and ill as he was, he ascended to the infirmary where the sister was supposed to be dying. The nuns saw that he could scarcely walk and that he was worn and weary; so they insisted on his taking food before going in. Having gained a little strength, he entered the infirmary and began hearing the sister's confession.

Just then the friars of the mitigation came to the monastery with the officers of justice. They searched the parlor, the confessional, the sacristy, and the church, for they were persuaded he would go to that monastery, if not for refuge, certainly for the means of leaving Toledo, and they hoped to be in time to seize him. They did not find him, and went away, having failed to think of entering the infirmary.

The nuns kept the saint in the house, and, as long as they could, in the infirmary, which was a place of safety. They asked him to tell them the story of his sufferings. They said it would

comfort the sick to hear it, and he yielded to their wish. But in all he said there was not one word against the friars of Toledo, nor any trace of ill-feeing. He made excuses for them and took on himself all the blame.

Meanwhile the sisters were providing a habit for him, for he was clad in the habit of the mitigation.

It was impossible to lodge him in the monastery, and to send him out was dangerous. The prioress, in her anxiety, sent for a great friend of the order, Don Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, canon and treasurer of the cathedral church, to whom she told what had taken place. Don Pedro took the saint to his own lodgings where he remained some days, and then, when he had recovered his strength, he went with two of Don Pedro's servants to the monastery of Almodovar del Campo, a house of friars of his own order and profession.

Soon afterward St. Teresa came to Toledo from Avila and heard the story of the imprisonment. She wished the nuncio to be told of the way in which the friars of the mitigation, whom he befriended, had dealt with one who was wholly innocent.

CHAPTER SEVENTEENTH

THE REFORM OF CARMEL REJOICES AT THE MIRACULOUS ESCAPE OF ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS. HIS ADMIRABLE ECSTASY IN THE CONVENT OF VEAS. THE SAINT RETIRES TO THE CONVENT OF CALVARIO.

The news of our saint's miraculous escape filled all the reformed family with joy, and especially our holy mother St. Teresa, who had prayed for it so ardently. The superiors of the order assembled in the convent of Almodovar and congratulated the saint on his marvelous escape and gave most fervent thanks to God.

All the superiors were present and forthwith gathered in chapter to make various appointments for the benefit of the order. Fra Pedro, prior of Calvario in Andalusia, was elected procurator of the reformed Carmel at the Vatican. St. John of the Cross was made vicar of the convent of Calvario. Two reasons influenced them in sending St. John to Andalusia, to the convent of Calvario; first, to deliver him from the persecution of the fathers of the observance, and second, to afford him in that very lonely place full satisfaction of his ardent desire for solitude with his Beloved.

Fra Pedro of the Angels, the newly elected procurator of the order to Rome, went to take

leave of St. John, who, divinely enlightened, said to him, "You are going, my father, shoeless to Rome; but you will return to Spain with your shoes on."

The prophecy was accomplished. Fra Pedro became lax and through weakness betrayed his trust. On his return to Spain, having done no service whatever to the order, he went back to his brethren of the mitigation in the convent of Granada, where he ended his days under a cloud of shame and sorrow.

As soon as the chapter of Almodovar was over, St. John of the Cross left the place and on his way to Mount Calvary stopped at Veas to see the nuns there, and especially the prioress, the venerable Anne of Jesus.

The nuns rejoiced to see the confessor who had suffered so much for the order and who was the great pillar of the reform among the friars. While he was with the sisters in the parlor, the prioress desired one of the nuns to sing. The sister sang, and her song was of the blessedness of suffering.

Quien no sabe de penas
En este triste valle de dolores,
No sabe de buenas
Ni ha gustado de amores
Pues penas es el traje de amadores.

As soon as she began, St. John felt that he was about to fall into a trance, so he made a sign to the religious to cease, but it was too late and he clung to the bars of the grating lest his body should be lifted up from the ground. He remained for an hour lost in prayer, insensible to all around him. The nuns of Veas became witnesses of a marvel which the nuns of the Incarnation at Avila had seen when he was confessor there.

The chair in which the servant of God sat on this occasion was religiously kept by the community, and even escaped the fire in 1810. It is now in the possession of the Carmelites of Jaen; a considerable fragment of it is in the Carmel at Brussels (Vie de la Mere Anne de Jesus, Vol. I, P. 246).

From Veas he went to the monastery of Mount Calvary, far away from the tumults of men, in the solitudes of Andalusia. The friars of Penuela had removed thither in December, 1576, in obedience to the decree of the first chapter of Almodovar, held 18 September of that year. This was done under Fra Pedro of the Angels who removed the community, thirty in number, and established it in a solitude called Corenzuela. The monastery was henceforth known as the monastery of Mount Calvary.

Fra Pedro was a man of great zeal, mortified and laborious. He was favored with the gift

of prayer and was often seen lost in rapture. The order thought so well of him, as we have seen, that he was elected as the delegate of the friars to go to Rome.

But he had not been prudent in the government of the monastery of Mount Calvary. He had sanctioned many practices which were not wise. As before in Pastrana, so now in Corenzuela, St. John of the Cross, whose whole life had been one continued mortification, had to restrain and temper the mortification of others, by checking practices and observances which had crept in or had been openly brought in without warrant of the rule and constitutions.

There were men in this monastery who defended these novelties, saying the rule allows things to be done which are not enjoined by it. He answered that the permission was for single persons, not for whole communities. They urged upon him a further consideration that this house was far away from the concourse of men, and as none outside the monastery claimed their services, they were therefore free to lead a more rigorous and penitential life. St. John of the Cross would not give way before any plausibilities of this kind. He insisted on the careful observance of the rule and constitutions by which their lives were to be ordered. They were to attain to perfection in a definite way, he said, and not by inventions of their own.

The friars of Carmel were called to one special kind of life, and they would miss their road if they departed from it.

He was always pitiless when he encountered extravagances of men who were too wise to keep the law under which they were obliged to live. He lopped off the excesses of Corenzuela as he had done like excesses in Pastrana. He who was so austere himself, was never austere with others; he would not impose rules of his own, nor allow others to impose them. As in the government of communities, so in the direction of single persons, he never made himself their master. He was content to administer the law and watch over its observance.

"Spiritual directors," he said, "are not the chief workers, but rather the Holy Ghost. They are instruments only, to guide souls by the rule of faith and the law of God according to the spirit which God gives to each. Their object, therefore, should not be to guide souls by a way of their own, suitable to themselves, but to ascertain, if they can, the way by which God himself is guiding them." (Living Flame, Stanza III.)

While he was checking extravagances and moderating penances in others, his own life was the most penitential in the house. But his penances never were in the way, and his austerities never interfered with the regular observance

of the community. His cell was the poorest and the most scantily furnished. He had in it but two books, his breviary and the Holy Bible. If he wanted other books he went to the library for them and took them back as soon as he had done with them. He slept about two hours during the night. The remainder was spent in prayer, either in the church before the most holy sacrament, or in his cell. He resumed the terrible penances of Duruelo, and gave his body no rest. It was the only creature of God for whom he had no mercy.

The former prior of Mount Calvary, among other mortifications visible to the outer world, had allowed the friars to go out to beg for the monastery. St. John of the Cross always resisted this. It was not directed by the rule and it was in his eyes the high-road to dissipation and loss of the recollected spirit which is one of the graces and charms of Carmel. He would not allow any begging under any conditions. The friars were the servants of God, he said, and he, as the good master of the house, would provide for their wants. The faith of the saint was strong and clear, and it pained him to see one of his religious give way to uneasy thoughts about the sustenance of his brethren.

One day he was told that there was no food in the house, but he was not troubled by the news. The community came to the refectory at

the appointed time, for he had given orders that no change should be made. A fragment of bread was found and by his direction brought into the refectory and grace was said. The fathers sat down before an empty table and St. John spoke to them of the hidden graces of poverty, of the merit of suffering and conformity to the will of God, with so much unction that the fathers left the refectory with their hearts on fire. They gave thanks to God for leaving them that day without food to eat.

They retired to their cells and no sooner had they begun to prepare themselves for prayer than the whole house was disturbed by a loud knocking at the outer door. The porter went to the door and saw there a man with a letter for the prior. The porter took it and finding St. John in the church praying before the holy sacrament, gave it to him. The saint opened it and as soon as he read it, began to cry like a man in pain. The porter was greatly distressed and begged him to tell why he was weeping so bitterly.

"I cry, my brother," the saint replied, "because God thinks us too weak to bear hunger any longer. He could not trust us for one day and is sending us food."

In the afternoon a servant of Dona Filipa de Caravajal came from Ubeda with two mules laden with provisions for the house.

On another occasion the community had no food for the sick fathers in the infirmary. The religious went down to pray before the most blessed sacrament and while they were in prayer abundant supplies of provisions, with medicine and two hundred reals in money, were sent them by Don Andres Ortega Cabrio, who knew nothing of the distress of the monastery.

In the town of Iznatorafe, about six miles away from the monastery, was a man possessed of the devil. His friends and relatives, having heard of the sanctity of the vicar of Mount Calvary, implored him to come to their relief.

The saint yielded to their importunities and visited the place.

The man possessed was brought to him and the evil spirit, betraying before all present the terror which had seized him, in a whining voice began to complain that another St. Basil had come.

The servant of God commanded him in the name of Christ to cease from his possession and on the instant the evil spirit departed and the man was restored to perfect health of mind and body.

But the devil, thus defeated, was bent on revenge and, entering into a woman who lived in a village through which the servant of God had to pass on his way home, waited his arrival. As the saint was passing, the woman came forth

to meet him and begged him to come into her house, but he turned away saying he would rather go into hell than into her house.

From Corenzuela he went once a week to Veas to hear the confessions of the nuns there. The road was hilly and rough but he, as worn out as he was, went always on foot, never heeding either weather or distance. The nuns were earnestly recommended by St. Teresa through the prioress, Anne of Jesus, to have recourse to his services, for he was a man, she said, "of great spirituality, learning, and experience." On another occasion she writes to the same prioress saying, "I have not one like him in all Castille."

In the monastery of Mount Calvary, the saint began to write on mystical theology. Two of his greatest books, the Ascent of Mount Carmel and the Dark Night of the Soul, were written there.

CHAPTER EIGHTEENTH

Foudation of Baeza. Poverty of the House. Miraculous Relief.

The saint had been scarcely seven months in Corenzuela when one day, while conversing with some of the sisters in Veas, he said that he would not be long their confessor. They were surprised, and asked the reason. After some hesitation, for probably the words had escaped him, he told them he must leave Corenzuela for Baeza, where another house of the order would be soon founded. When the nuns heard this, they were not troubled at the news, because another foundation was then considered impossible.

The people of Baeza, a rich and noble city, seeing the fathers of the reform in Penuela, wished to have them also within their own gates and requested Fra Angel de Salazar, then superior of the barefooted Carmelites, to send them to Baeza. In the spring of 1579 the saint, in obedience to the command of his superior, went from Corenzuela to the old house of Penuela, which had been reoccupied by the friars August 11, 1577. From this house the saint took several members for the new foundation. All preparations having been made, he returned

to Mount Calvary, and from thence, with his religious, on foot and fasting, set out for Baeza, 13 June, 1579. All the furniture they had was carried by one ass. They arrived in the evening, and made preparations to open the house the following day. Next morning, which was Trinity Sunday, the little bell of the community which had been hung out of the window, was rung. St. John of the Cross said mass, and took possession.

This house was a college, like that founded in Alcala de Henares in 1570, and St. John of the Cross was its founder and rector. A saintly priest, Alvaro Nunez Marcelo, who had helped greatly in the second foundation of Penuela, came to see the friars. He was shown the house and all that it contained. The altar of the temporary church alone was furnished. The rest of the house was bare, and the furniture even of the altar was of the poorest kind consistent with reverence. The priest was edified exceedingly, and went his way. Next day he sent some mattresses to the college, that the fathers might have at least something to sleep on. The rector was most grateful, as he always was for the slightest kindness shown him, but he would not accept the gift of the tender-hearted priest.

"The Carmelites," he said, "sleep on the floor when well, and at present there is no sickness in the house."

In the prison in Toledo, where he had learned the inestimable worth of suffering and poverty, St. John of the Cross had been raised by God to such heights of prayer as words cannot describe. He had seen and tasted heavenly food and would not throw it away, nor refuse it to his brethren, within the measure of the rule. He governed the house and trained it, as he had trained the others over which he had been placed, in silence, by prayer and meditation, and by the strict observance of the rule and constitutions. The doctors of the university could not refrain from praise of the new house even in their public sermons, and the odor of its good name was spread throughout Andalusia. The friars were hardly ever seen out of their church; only the students went out to the public lectures, and they were so recollected and mortified that they caused devotion in those who saw them pass. Though the house was founded for the service of the students, yet such was the order and recollection of it that novices were admitted into it without any inconvenience, either to them or to the students.

As the rector of the house, St. John of the Cross was compelled to unite the active with the contemplative life; necessarily he had many cares, and often had to converse with seculars. Living as he was, on the alms of the faithful, he had obligations to fulfill towards those who did him good.

In all this he was exact; but the silence of the house was not disturbed and the religious were not seen in the streets. He commended his benefactors to the care of God and served them to the utmost of his power in the pulpit and in the confessional. He would not allow that there was any necessity for appearing abroad. A religious out of the convent was in his opinion like a fish out of water.

It happened more than once that friars came to the refectory to find nothing but empty tables; and then St. John would say, "We may return to our cells; for as we have nothing to eat, it is a proof that we ought not to do so, seeing that our Lord has not provided for us." But as our Lord never disappoints those who trust in him, so it was in Baeza; for when the house was utterly empty, there would come men to the gate of the college with provisions enough for the wants of all therein.

The year 1580 was a year of sickness in Spain, and the house of Baeza suffered like the rest. At one time there were twenty friars in the infirmary, and there were neither beds for them to lie on, nor food to nourish them, nor medicine to give them. The procurator in his distress went to the rector, and begged leave to go out to seek help from the town. The rector replied that he longed himself for means to relieve the sick, but he did not think it was right to be troublesome to the people outside.

"We have our Lord in the house to help us," he said, "and instead of wasting our time going about the streets, let us spend it in the choir and ask him to help us, and he will do it."

That very night, and again in the morning, some good people sent twenty mattresses and much food to the house, and the sick were relieved.

St. John had a very great devotion to the Most Holy Trinity. He continually said the mass of this great mystery. They asked him one day why he said that mass so often; he answered pleasantly, "I say the mass of the Most Holy Trinity because there is no one more holy in heaven."

Saying mass had become to him now what it is to so many saints, a torment and a joy. The inflowing of the divine communications was so abundant and so vehement as to overpower all resistance on his part. The humble and lowly servant of God suffered exceedingly when these communications became visible and known to others. One day, while saying mass in Baeza, all his efforts to control himself proved unavailing. When he drank the most precious blood, before he could replace the chalice on the altar, his soul was carried away by the divine communications and he remained motionless as if dead. After some time he recovered himself partially; but being still uncon-

scious of the place he was in, he came down from the altar, and made for the sacristy to hide himself. The people were amazed, and looked one to another in wonder. At last a pious woman cried out, "The saint is unable to go on; call for the angels to finish the mass, for they alone can do it with due devotion." The friars in the house heard what had happened, and one of them came down into the church, led the holy man back to the altar, and helped him to finish the mass.

The nuns of Caravaca were in sore trouble, and St. John of the Cross, at the request of St. Teresa, went thither to console them. While there the nuns saw rays of light round him at the altar, and the prioress, Mother Anne of St. Albert, asked him in the confessional what had happened to him while at the altar. He replied at once that God revealed himself to his soul with such force that he could hardly complete the sacrifice, and that he was occasionally afraid to say mass.

CHAPTER NINETEENTH

ST. JOHN'S DEVOTION TO THE MYSTERIES OF THE HUMANITY OF JESUS CHRIST. HIS FERVENT REHEARSAL OF MARTYRDOM. HIS CONFIDENCE IN DIVINE PROVIDENCE. HIS PERFECTION IN THE PRACTICE OF VARIOUS VIRTUES.

With the same devotion with which he offered the holy sacrifice of the mass and venerated the divine mysteries, St. John of the Cross also celebrated the feasts and solemnities of the sacred humanity of Christ, and very specially his birth-day at Christmas. During this festival he did not permit elaborately prepared performances, because they occasion distractions rather than devout and holy recreation. But he made much of improvised dramatics, as, for example, on one occasion he distributed some of his friars through the cloisters of the convent to represent the householders of Bethlehem, while two of the religious, adjusting their habits without the aid of secular ornament, played the part of the most holy Virgin and St. Joseph trying to find a lodging. The saint himself went with them and asked lodging for the guests, and when he approached one of the houses and saw the doors shut against the son of God in the womb of the holy Virgin, his eloquence was great in representing the merits of

the holy family, reprimanding the hardness of the inn-keepers, complaining most lovingly with the eternal Father for consenting to such things, and consoling the holy Virgin and St. Joseph in such great trouble. His arguments were so sweet and affectionate that the religious burst into tears and there was no heart so hard as not to respond with lively sympathy.

Next day St. John dramatized the child already born, with whom he entertained himself in heavenly conversation. On one of these occasions he was filled with such impetuous feelings of joy that he went to a table on which a statue of the infant Jesus was placed and, taking it in his arms, began to dance with such great fervor that he seemed to be out of his mind. In comparison with the habitual modesty and calmness of the holy man this was very strange to his brethren. Then in the midst of these joys, he burst out singing,

Mi dulce y tierno Jesus,
Si amores me han de matar,
Ahora tienen lugar.

Absorbed in the sweetness of this mystery and the love of the infant Jesus, his face glowed cheerfully as if it were enflamed with the divine love.

To kindle more quickly this divine fire, he used at other times to stage rehearsals of martyrdom. He introduced these rehearsals

into the college of Baeza to inflame his religious in the love of God and appease his own ardent desires for suffering. To this purpose he used to speak during recreation of the excellency of martyrdom, and when he saw his hearers fervent and well disposed, he would say to them:

"Perhaps God has willed us to be martyrs. Let us therefore practice it now at least in representation. Let us rehearse it now so that when the time comes we may be prompt to die for him."

He prepared the rehearsal, appointing one to be the tyrant, another the accuser, a third the executioner, while he took the part of the martyr, to encourage others by his example. Knowing how fond the holy father was of these rehearsals, the master of novices of the novitiate of Jaen invited him to participate in one of them at the novitiate. The master of novices and our blessed father were the martyrs. The Christians were accused before the judge, who was seated on his tribunal and questioned them severely about their faith. They having confessed with great fervor the holy Catholic faith and detestation of every error, sect and heresy, the judge commanded their backs to be laid bare and the victims to be tied to two orange trees in the garden and there to be scourged until they repented and renounced the faith of Christ. The executioners carried out the

orders of the judge as if it was a case of real punishment. The fervor of St. John of the Cross was so great and his desires of suffering so vehement that he laughed at the scourges and reproached the executioners with being cowards. Carried away with the spirit of his part he even made use of his authority (he was then vicar-provincial of Andalusia) and commanded them to scourge him so severely that his blood would run all over his back. They really did so and he was very happy and cheerful. The judge, seeing the perseverance and joy of the martyrs, commanded the persecution to cease and the rehearsal was over.

While our saint was enjoying his wonderful communications with God in the college of Baeza, the decree of separation of the discalced Carmelites from the fathers of the observance was obtained from Gregory XIII. To execute this decree the discalced fathers met in chapter in Alcala de Henares on the fourth of March, 1581. In this chapter they elected four definitors, of whom our saint was the third and, burdened with this office, after having finished the chapter, he went to Baeza to continue his work of rector. He remained in Baeza till the fourteenth of June, when the community of Granada elected him their prior; this was the first time that he governed a house.

He succeeded one of his own novices of Pastrana, Fra Augustine of the Kings, who remembered and observed the lessons of his master. Fra Augustine lived and died a saint, and after his death his body saw no corruption. Earnest, simple and fervent, he governed his house according to the rule and constitutions and therefore St. John had here no changes to make nor fallen discipline to restore. The religious were docile and fervent and the order of the house was exact.

The visitor, Fra Diego of the Trinity, went down to Granada to make his visitation, and the only thing he found fault with was the great retirement in which the fathers lived; the prior was never seen outside his monastery, and the visitor thought he showed want of due consideration for the friends and benefactors of the order. St. John of the Cross, having learned the wishes of his superior, gave up his own opinion, and, it being Christmas time, made up his mind to call on the archbishop and the president of the chancery. As the house of the latter was near the monastery, he called there first, having one of his friars with him. The president received him with the utmost respect and courtesy; for the saint, if not seen outside of the monastery, was well known in the city. St. John, after the usual salutations, with great humility, begged the president to excuse him for his past negligence. The president said there was nothing to be excused.

"For," he said, "we like, father prior, to see you and your religious in your own houses rather than in ours; in the first you edify us, in the latter you entertain us."

The servant of God took his leave as quickly as he could and, without making his visit to the archbishop, returned to the monastery. On the way he said to his companion,

"This man has put us and the whole order to shame. I wish we had all of us heard him, that we might be convinced how little we gain by this folly of making visits."

As soon as he had returned to the house he told the community what had happened and then added,

"My fathers, you cannot have a more trustworthy proof of what the people in the world ask of us than this given by one of them. They do not want us as courtiers, but as saints; and that not in their own houses, but in ours, praying to God in their behalf."

One day a certain personage of Granada tried to move him from his course, showing the advantage of calling on some wealthy persons who would give abundant alms to complete the building of the monastery.

The servant of God replied, "These people will give their alms either for my sake or for the sake of God. If the latter, there is no reason why I should press them. If for my sake, I see no reason why I should trouble them to give

away their goods for so poor an end as giving pleasure to me."

One night after compline Fra Augustine of St. Joseph, the procurator, came to him and having told him that there was nothing in the house for the next day, asked leave to beg for the necessary food.

"Well," said the saint, "God has plenty of time to provide for us, we need not be in such a hurry to make him a defaulter. We have had our supper and he who gave us tonight our supper will give us tomorrow our dinner."

The procurator withdrew, but next morning he came back with the same request. The servant of God would not listen to him, notwithstanding his importunity and the distress he was in. The saint had put his whole trust in God and was not put to shame, for while the friars were saying prime there came a man to the gate and asked the porter of what the religious were in need. He said he had not been able to sleep the whole night because an interior voice had said, "Thou art at ease and the friars in the monastery of the martyrs are in want."

The porter told him that there was no food in the house and the good man immediately supplied it.

The saint, though he disliked and discouraged begging, lived on alms all his life, and cherished his poverty as a special grace of God. In populous and wealthy places, however, such as Baeza

and Granada, he would allow two of the brothers to go out twice in the week, Wednesdays and Saturdays, to beg alms at the doors of the houses. But that was done to keep people from saying that the houses he governed were always fed by miracle. He trusted in God and had no misgivings. He was God's servant, this was God's house, and he knew that the Master would provide for his own.

CHAPTER TWENTIETH.

FOUNDATION OF THE MONASTERY OF NUNS IN GRANADA. ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS IS INSULTED IN THE STREETS. HE WATCHES OVER THE NOVICES UNDER VENERABLE ANNE OF JESUS.

The people of Granada, edified by the friars, wished to have also the nuns of the new Carmel in their city and some of the chief personages in it pressed the matter upon Fra Diego of the Trinity, then provincial vicar of Andalusia. The vicar gave his consent and made it known to the Venerable Anne of Jesus during his visitation of the monastery of the nuns at Veas in the month of October, 1581. But Anne of Jesus was then very ill and had no confidence in the promises made to Fra Diego. She was persuaded moreover that the archbishop, Don Diego de Salvatierra, would not allow another monastery to be built in Granada. One morning during holy communion she changed her mind and, having consulted her confessor, St. John of the Cross, she determined to go to Granada as one of the nuns, hoping that St. Teresa herself would come from Avila for the foundation.

On the thirteenth of November Fra Diego ordered St. John of the Cross to go to Avila,

where St. Teresa was then staying, and bring her to Granada with the care and consideration "befitting her person and her years."* St. John made the journey to Avila and saw the mother of Carmel there for the first time since the seizure of his person in the cottage near the monastery of the Incarnation.

But she could not go herself to Granada because she was about to make a foundation in Burgos. Moreover, the two saints were as poor as they could be. On the twenty-ninth of November, 1581, St. Teresa wrote to the father provincial, who was himself in distress in Salamanca, "Fra John of the Cross wished very much to send you some money and fully counted on it if he could spare a part of that which had been given to him for his journey, but he could not. I think he will try to send you some later. Antonio Ruiz . . . has given four scuddi for you. I am waiting for the means of sending them to you. It is as much as I can do not to keep them myself; for, as matters are at present, I should not be surprised if I were tempted to steal."

On the feast of the Immaculate Conception, St. John returned to Veas with two nuns from Avila and another from Toledo. The nuns waited at Veas till Monday, 15 January, 1582, when the Venerable Anne of Jesus with her

*Letter of St. Teresa, 363; note of Fra Antonio of St. Joseph, p. 7, vol iii. Letter 31.

nuns, attended by St. John of the Cross and Fra Pedro of the Angels, set out in the cold winter at three o'clock in the morning. During the journey none of their spiritual exercises were omitted. The hours of prayer and meditation were observed and the divine office said devoutly as if they had been in a monastery. On Friday they reached Dayfuentes, a village not far from Granada, where they were told that the house taken for them in the city could not be had. It was too late now to stop the nuns, who were on the road. Their friends were therefore in the greatest trouble, not knowing what to do; besides, they had not obtained, and could not obtain, the consent of the archbishop to make the foundation. He was resolved to have no more nuns in the city.

Friday night, while the nuns were still at Dayfuentes, they heard the sound of fearful thunder. The tempest raged in Granada and the palace of the archbishop was struck. Part of his library was burnt and some of his mules were killed. The lightning entered close to the room where the archbishop was sleeping. He was so much frightened he became ill and he had to keep his bed the following day.

There was in Granada a penitent of St. John of the Cross, Dona Ana de Mercado y Penasola. She dwelt in a good house with her brother, Don Luis de Mercado, who was one of the chief persons who urged the foundation. Don Luis

said to his sister, "The nuns are on the road and it would be well if they could come here till they can find a house." Dona Ana not only gave her house, but busied herself in making the necessary arrangements, especially in finishing a room to be used as a chapel. At three o'clock on the morning of 20 January, 1582, the two friars with the nuns came to the door and there stood Dona Ana ready to receive them.

Anne of Jesus took possession of the house as if it were her own and on entering began with the nuns to sing the Laudate Dominum. She then ordered the doors to be shut and would not let any of the friars say mass before she communicated with the archbishop. She sent a letter to the archbishop announcing her arrival in Granada and begged his blessing. She also begged him to come and reserve the most holy sacrament, adding that though it was a feast day she would not hear mass without his sanction. It was said that the archbishop was much changed after the storm, and it seems that there was truth in the report. He sent word that he was sorry he could not come himself, being unwell, but he would send his vicar-general who would say mass and do all that Ana of Jesus desired. The vicar came and gave communion to the nuns and reserved the most holy sacrament.

St. John of the Cross retired to his own house, leaving the nuns' foundation in the hands of the Venerable Ana of Jesus, but he afterwards supplied her with food and many necessary things. Dona Ana saw the nuns always contented and cheerful and, not suspecting that they were hiding their needs from her, left them in sore distress, so that St. John of the Cross, out of his poverty, had to come to their relief.

Soon after this the servant of God, coming out of his monastery, was met in the street by a woman with a child in her arms. She held out the child before him and asked him to maintain it, for it was his own. The holy man bade her begone but she persisted in following and insulting him. At last he stopped, for a crowd was gathering, and calmly asked her who was the mother of the child. The wretched woman answered it was a great lady of Granada, against whom nothing could be said.

"How long has she lived in Granada?" asked the saint.

She replied that the lady was born in the place and never had been half a league away from it all her life.

"How old is the child?" asked the saint.

The woman answered, "About twelve months."

"It is a great miracle, for I have not been a year in Granada yet, and in the whole course

of my life have never been within many leagues of it."

The people who had gathered round laughed and then hooted the woman, and the man of God went on his way perfectly undisturbed.

At this time, in addition to the government of his own house and the care of many penitents who came to him, he had to watch over and encourage the nuns in the new foundation, which began, as usual, in complete poverty. After waiting for seven months, the nuns found a house. In the meantime more than two hundred persons sought admission into the community. In all that number, however, Ana of Jesus says in her account of the foundation, there was not one whom she could accept. Some of them she refused at once, and others she recommended to study their way of life. She accepted six novices at last, whom St. John of the Cross instructed in the way of prayer and perfect detachment from all created things.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIRST

THE CHAPTER OF ALMODOVAR. THE SAINT OPPOSES THE RE-ELECTION OF THE PRIORS. FAMINE IN GRANADA. WRITINGS OF THE SAINT. FOUNDATION OF MALAGA. RESTORATION OF A NUN TO HEALTH. MARY OF CHRIST.

At Almodovar, May, 1583, St. John of the Cross, prior of Granada, was present at the provincial chapter. After having elected the four definitors, they discussed the election of the priors. St. John of the Cross wished the election to be made in the monasteries and not in the provincial chapter, but the chapter decided against him and elected him once more prior of Granada.

The saint not only objected and disapproved of the election of priors in the general chapter, but further pressed the fathers to change the practice of re-election, saying it was not good to continue the same persons in office, the effect being to make men ambitious and fond of power. He begged them to allow at least an interval during which the priors might remain subject, which would be profitable to them and highly advantageous to the order; for thus there would be more men fitted to be priors by their experience in government. Many of the fathers were

of this opinion, but the greater number thought otherwise and the practice of re-election was continued.

The year of 1584 was a year of sore distress and famine in Spain, especially in Andalusia. The people from the country round flocked into Granada asking for bread. St. John, like his master, had compassion on the hungry multitude and, though living upon alms himself with a large household to maintain, gave alms abundantly out of his poverty. In the first place he employed as many as he could in building the monastery, which he carried on during the famine. With money he received from charitable people, he bought all the grain he could and charged the porter at the gate to distribute it to the poor and never to send any one empty away. The more he relieved, the more came from all quarters of the city for relief, and at last many even of the noble families confided to the saint their state of helpless destitution. St. John's heart was full of tenderness for those who were ashamed to beg. He therefore relieved and maintained them by means of two lay brothers whom he sent out to them with the necessary supplies.

Though he ministered to the wants of so many, he did not neglect his friars. He provided for them as if there had been no famine in the country, while to human eyes all the re-

sources of the house were at the service of the multitudinous poor who, but for his help and trust in God, would have died of hunger in the streets.

The great meekness of the saint was tested in this convent of Granada. He had to correct one of the friars for some fault or other, and did so in his accustomed way, very seriously but very tenderly. The poor friar utterly forgot himself and, instead of receiving his correction meekly, burst out in angry language and reviled his superior. The servant of God did not check him but threw himself on the ground and remained prostrate while the friar's anger lasted. Then, rising, he said, "For the love of God," and went his way. The friar's eyes were opened. He followed and threw himself at his father's feet, confessing his wrong and thanking him for having so much patience and charity with him.

St. John was gifted with supernatural light to understand the consciences of his penitents. This was not limited by distance. From his convent in Granada the holy father saw Mother Ana of St. Albert in Caravaca in greatest trouble on account of some scruples which tormented her. She made up her mind to write to the saint and when she was about to do it, she received a letter from him in which he answered all her doubts and delivered her from

her affliction. The nuns of Granada were convinced that he saw their hearts and that in the retirement of his cell he registered all that was happening in their souls. They were accordingly very careful in all their actions, not daring to be negligent in the smallest thought, believing that everything was visible to their spiritual father.

Among the many souls whom he directed to the highest perfection and many others whom he drew from their sinful life, was a man in Granada possessed by the devil. Many exorcisms and prayers had been in vain. The relatives called the saint and requested him to take the case in his hand. Our Lord had given him light to know devils, the license they had from His Majesty to torment bodies, and the means of casting them away. Owing to his superior knowledge of these things, when he saw this wretched man he understood at once that he was one of those of whom our Lord said that they could not be exorcised except by prayer and fasting. Therefore he began to pray and asked all those present to do the same. The devil, seeing our Elias in prayer, understood that he would be conquered and, angry against his enemy, broke out into injurious expressions. He tried to distract the saint's prayer with violent howling, but the saint continued and after some time rose, saying, "Now the Lord

has given us victory against this enemy. There is nothing to fear."

And it was so, for, having commanded the devil to get out of the man, he immediately obeyed and all the people admired the power of the saint.

Leaving aside many other cases, only one other is added here, for the sake of the instruction it contains. While St. John of the Cross was hearing confessions in the church, a very spiritual person who was praying nearby saw that in a corner of the church there were many devils in different forms, lions, tigers, toads and venomous reptiles, tempting persons with the variety of temptations which their figures represented. But the person noticed that when the saint raised his eyes and looked towards that corner they all ran away to hide themselves. She understood from this that there is not any place where evil spirits cannot tempt; and that St. John of the Cross was master of the devils, for they feared even the glance of his eye.

St. John was at this time writing his explanation of the spiritual canticle Adonde Te Escondiste, which he composed in the prison of Toledo. We owe this book to the Venerable Anne of Jesus, whose importunities overcame the saint's reluctance to write. The book was dedicated to her and is now religiously kept by the nuns of Jaen. At the same time and at

the urgent request of his penitent, Dona Ana de Penasola, he was writing the explanation of another hymn of his, perhaps the most wonderful of them all, Llama de Amor Viva. He yielded to the request of Dona Ana with great unwillingness, because the hymn is of matters so interior and spiritual as to be beyond the compass of human speech.

He always wrote after earnest prayer, without help from any book whatever, and very slowly, lest he should be carried away and his work become the expression of mere human wisdom, rather than of the Holy Ghost, whose work is never hurried.

In December of this year 1584 the provincial, Fra Jerome of the Mother of God, sanctioned the foundation of a monastery of nuns in Malaga. Fra Jerome could not go himself to Malaga, so he sent St. John of the Cross, who was at the time vicar-provincial of Andalusia as well as prior of Granada. When the order of the provincial was brought to the saint, he was attending Sister Isabel of the Incarnation in her last illness. The servant of God was therefore troubled at having to leave his penitent in the hour of her great distress. He betook himself to prayer and while he was praying they called him to the sick nun whom the physician believed to be at the point of death. The saint went to her at once and gave her the last

sacraments. But suddenly, inspired by God, he began to read the gospel of St. Mark and when he came to the words, "Upon the sick they shall lay their hands" he laid his hands on the sister who was in her agony and the sickness departed from her. The next day she left her bed. The physicians declared her healing was miraculous.

St. John set out at once on his journey to Malaga with the nuns who were to be the founders of the house there. Mary of Christ, prioress of the new foundation, had a grievous fall which rendered her unconscious. The nuns with her began to bemoan her death, for the blood flowed abundantly from her head, while she gave no signs of life. The servant of God came up to them and laid his hand on the wound. The sister rose and went on her way with the others as if no accident had happened.

They arrived in Malaga and on the seventeenth of February, 1585, the new monastery was founded under the patronage of St. Joseph. St. John of the Cross said the first mass.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SECOND

THE CHAPTER OF LISBON. THE SAINT IS MADE VICAR-PROVINCIAL OF ANDALUSIA. HIS HUMILITY AND MODESTY.

Our holy father was still prior of Granada when the third chapter of the order was convened at Lisbon, 11 May, 1585. Fra Nicolas of Jesus Maria was elected second provincial of the order. Among the four newly elected definitors, the second was our holy father. The absence of the new provincial in Genoa, where he had gone to found a house, made it impossible for the fathers of the chapter to discuss the affairs of the order.

During his journey back to Granada, St. John was overtaken by the darkness of night on a rough and precipitous road. The ass on which he was riding stumbled in a most dangerous spot and the saint was thrown off. He began rolling down the steep hill-side towards a precipice where he must have been killed. Just before the fatal fall he felt himself held by a hand which offered him a piece of cloth. He seized it and by it was drawn back. Anne of Jesus saw in a trance the danger of the saint and prayed earnestly for him. On his return to Granada, the venerable mother asked him

what had happened to him at such an hour and on such a day. He told her and added, "It was you, then, my mother, who came to my relief."

As soon as Fra Nicolas returned from Genoa, he reassembled the chapter in Pastrana, 17 October, 1585. The chapter divided the province into four vicariates to be governed by the four definitors elected in Lisbon. That of Andalusia was given to St. John of the Cross. The vicars had more authority now than they had under Fra Jerome because they were appointed by the chapter of the order, whereas the vicars of Fra Jerome were merely his delegates and remained in office only so long as it pleased him to retain them.

The saint returned from the chapter of Pastrana to Granada charged with the care of thirteen monasteries, seven of men and six of women. These he visited regularly and diligently, inquiring into everything most minutely and correcting with all charity everything he found amiss. It was impossible to resist him, for he lived in every house he visited as the least of his brethren, sitting in the lowest place, and taking his proper place at the head of the others only in the public duties of the house and choir. He never allowed his friars to minister to him apart from the others and he was always with the community as a member of the household. He went over the whole of

the monastery, never leaving anything unvisited. He was specially attentive to the sick. He did the work of the house while in it as if he were a member of it, waited at the table in the refectory, heard confessions and preached. A stranger could not have distinguished the vicar-provincial from the other friars of the house.

His perfect humility moved the hearts of men. He had no difficulty in commanding. The most stubborn lacked courage to resist him, seeing one in his high office so detached from self. If some who had begun to like ease murmured against his austerity, they were soon silenced, for none could withstand a provincial who read in the refectory, made the beds of the sick in the infirmary, washed the feet of the guests and went to the garden with the novices to dig.

While travelling from one monastery to the other he never went out of his way to see anything for the sake of curiosity. Continually in the presence of God, he was either silent in prayer or conversing with his companion of heavenly things. Sometimes, like St. Wulstan of Worcester, he would chant the psalms aloud. On arriving at a monastery he went straight to the church to pray before the most holy sacrament, and then to the infirmary to see the sick, if there were any. One night he arrived at a house very late, after compline, when the law

of silence prevails. The prior and all the religious rose to receive him and, making manifest their joy at seeing him, broke the silence. He looked reproachfully at them and went straight to his cell without uttering a word.

About this time he received a visit in Granada from a provincial of another order, a man of great consideration on account of his office and distinguished birth. The servant of God was obliged for grave reasons to depart from his usual habit and return the provincial's visit. After some conversation the latter asked the saint how he liked the monastery, which was outside the city.

"Well enough," answered the servant of God, "for it is a lonely place, and I like the solitude."

The provincial said, "Your reverence must be the son of a farmer to like the country so much."

In his tone there was a hint of contempt.

"Ah, most reverend father, I am not so great as that," the servant of God replied, "my father was a poor weaver."

He was a true child of St. Teresa who, when she heard that Fra Jerome of the Mother of God had been searching into her pedigree in Avila, said to him, with some displeasure, that it was enough for her to be a child of the church and it distressed her to think of falling into one venial sin more than the thought of being the

daughter of the lowest of the low. Fra Diego of the Most Holy Sacrament, who was present at the time the provincial indulged his vanity at the expense of St. John of the Cross, said that all who heard the conversation looked at one another with amazement. They were pained at the vanity of the provincial, who had left the world, and wondered at the humility of the poor Carmelite.

On another occasion some of his friars told some people with whom they were conversing that St. John of the Cross had been prior of a certain monastery; but he, overhearing the words, turned round and said, "I was also cook there."

God gave him light to discharge his duties in a very wonderful way, in reward of his great diligence. On his return from one of his visitations he found Fra Alonso of the Mother of God, the master of novices in Granada, in great distress of mind. Fra Alonso was so overcome by spiritual dryness and interior darkness that he did not know what to do. He laid bare the state of his soul to the saint. The servant of God, when he had heard his story, smiled and said,

"Go, you silly one! All that is nothing."

Fra Alonso went his way, with his mind perfectly at rest.

Two novices had been received in the house during his absence. One was a priest and the

other a deacon. The servant of God went to see them in the novitiate and on coming out told the master that the deacon would give them much trouble and at last leave the order. The prophecy was fulfilled in due time, for the friars found that it was necessary to take the habit from him and send him away.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THIRD

FOUNDATION IN SEGOVIA. THE SAINT IN CARAVACA. VISITS PENUELA. FOUNDATION OF CORDOVA. VISITS SEVILLE. MIRACULOUS ESCAPE. FRA MARTIN AND THE NOVICES.

Dona Ana de Mercado y Penasola, a penitent of the saint, in order to fulfill the testamentary dispositions of her husband, Don Juan de Guevara, sought St. John's advice and offered to found a monastery of the friars of Carmel in Segovia. St. John, as provincial, accepted the foundation and ordered Fra Gregorio of Nazianzum to establish the house. Fra Gregorio executed his commission and took possession 3 May, 1586.

Meanwhile the servant of God was on visitation at Caravaca where a saintly penitent of his, Mother Anne of St. Albert, was prioress. Mother Anne spoke to him of the loss to the community because there were no friars of Carmel in Caravaca.

The servant of God replied, "Why do you not bring them?"

Mother Anne smiled, for she knew how difficult it was, and how much beyond her strength. St. John then bade her be of good courage and pray to our Lord and make the community also

pray, promising to do the same himself. He knew the time was come for the fulfillment of a revelation he had received when prior of Baeza that a monastery of friars was to be founded in Caravaca.

He then left the mother prioress and, having vested himself, went to say mass. As soon as he ascended the steps of the altar the prioress saw a light round the servant of God which became more and more brilliant as he went on with the mass. At first it seemed to come out of the tabernacle. After the consecration it emanated from the sacred host, and the priest in the midst of the light seemed to shine as a most clear sun. The mass lasted very long, but it was a wonderful joy to all the nuns, whose eyes were fountains of sweet tears.

When the servant of God had finished his thanksgiving he was called to the confessional, where he found the mother prioress waiting for him.

"Father," she asked, "why was the mass so long?"

The servant of God asked her how long it had lasted.

"When we taste divine things a long time seems but short," the prioress said. "Perhaps you had a vision."

"I saw," replied the saint, "what you too have been allowed to see."

"I should like to know what you saw," the prioress said, "for what I saw must have been very little. At least it hindered you in the saying of the mass, for you were a long time at the altar."

"So it was, child," said the saint, and then there was a silence, for he fell into a trance. But when he returned to himself, he said, "God showed great things to me, a sinner, and that in such majesty that I was unable to go on."

The mother prioress still insisted and asked for more information.

Then the saint, overcome with her importunity, said, "My soul is now so full of heavenly consolations that I dare not be alone and recollected. They are too much for my strength. Now and then I refrain from saying mass, for I am afraid something marvellous will take place. I have asked our Lord to give me more strength, or to take me away, but that will not be while I have the care of souls."

The servant of God had asked that he might not die while holding any office in the order and he believed that his prayer was heard.

About the middle of February of this year, 1586, he left Caravaca for Penuela. He remained there during lent, going to Linares three times every week on foot to preach, returning in the same way, not accepting any food while in the city.

From Penuela he went to Cordova, where a house was offered to him for a monastery. He gladly took possession of it, 18 May, 1586, the Sunday after the Ascension. Having placed it under the care of his novice in Pastrana, Fra Augustine of the Kings, he went to Seville. There he found the fathers were too often and too long out of the convent, specially during lent and advent. The excuse for this was preaching; but the servant of God would not accept it. He ordered matters otherwise. The rule he made is the ground-work of that which was afterwards embodied in the constitutions of the order.

The nuns of Seville had been in an unsuitable place. St. Teresa herself had not been able to find a house for them according to her desires. But now they acquired a better house and the vicar of the province settled them in their new dwelling.

From Seville the saint returned to Cordova to see the progress of the new foundation, which was very great; for which he gave thanks to God. The friars were held in great reverence by the people. But he, in the clearness of vision which humility gives, detected a spirit among his brethren which he hated with his whole heart. They wished to stand well with the world for the greater glory of God. One day a friar in his sermon spoke of the gratitude

of the community to the people of Cordova for their generous support of the monastery. His language was oratorical and somewhat exaggerated. It brought down upon himself and the whole house the sharp reprehensions of the saint. He was full of gratitude to all men who rendered the slightest service. Nevertheless he spoke with severity to the friars and charged them not to say anything of the affairs of the house when preaching the word of God. In doing so they would probably be praising themselves indirectly and that must be avoided, especially among the religious of Carmel.

At this time there were workmen busy in the monastery. Among other tasks, they had to throw down a wall in order to build the new church. They had planned to throw it down without injury to the house but they made a mistake and the whole mass fell on the cell of St. John of the Cross. He was in it at the time. Everybody believed he was crushed to death. The fallen mass was cleared away in the utmost haste; but all were without hope of seeing him alive. To their amazement and joy they found him standing in a corner of the cell. He had not even been touched. He came forth smiling and unhurt. For a moment their joy was so great they could not speak. Then they asked him how it was he had escaped, and he simply replied,

"She of the white mantle covered me with it."

And all understood that our Lady had been there to save him.

When the wonderful escape of the servant of God became known in the city and in the country round about, a great many people came to the monastery begging to be received into the order. Of these the saint accepted nine, two for the house of Cordova, and the others for Seville.

As the two whom he kept in Cordova were the poorest in worldly goods, some of the fathers begged him to change them for others who could be of service to their house, seeing that the community of Seville was not so poor as they. Cordova, indeed, was then in great distress. The man of God was not moved by their reasons. He told them he had deliberately chosen the poorest novices for the purpose of founding the house more securely, keeping out of it all human considerations whatsoever.

Thus the two poorest novices were kept and the other seven sent to Seville. The saint ordered Fra Martin of the Assumption and a lay brother to take them thither, giving them nothing but a sorry mule to carry their clothes. Fra Martin, though not unused to the ways of the saint, was very much alarmed, for he was starting on a long journey without any money. He

was afraid, he said, that the novices might faint by the way.

The saint smiled and said, "Go, my son; our Lord has made everything ready. You will want nothing, and none of the novices will faint by the way. They will reach Seville sound and fervent."

Fra Martin was a true religious. He obeyed at once and set out with the seven novices without a penny to defray their expenses on the road. In every place through which he passed he found nothing but kindness. People even pressed alms upon him. He arrived in Seville without any inconvenience but heartily ashamed of himself for his want of faith. The novices too were in perfect health of mind and body. On his return he presented himself to the saint to give an account of his journey and return to him the money which remained in his hands out of the alms he received on the way. He had left Cordova in doubt, without a penny, and he had now, to his own shame and confusion, more than seven pounds in his purse. The saint told him to give the money to the procurator of the house, adding,

"I would rather you had suffered want and wrong for the love of God who provided for you so well. Thus you would have come back to me a greater saint."

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOURTH

The Saint Summoned by the Provincial to Madrid. He Takes Anne to Madrid. Miracles. Bujalance. Caravaca.

Summoned by the provincial to Madrid to meet the other vicars, 13 August, 1586, St. John of the Cross fell ill on the way, at Toledo, and was therefore unable to attend. When he had recovered his strength he traveled homeward. Near Cordova he went aside to rest himself in a wood, retiring into it a good way and leaving his companion behind. After some time the friar went in quest of the servant of God and, searching for him among the trees, saw him raised in the air high above the ground, lost in prayer.

Soon after St. John's return to Granada he received orders from his superior, Fra Nicolas of Jesus Maria, to bring Anne of Jesus, prioress of Granada, to Madrid, where she was to become prioress of a new monastery for which the archbishop of Toledo had given permission. They set out from Granada in the latter part of August. The river Guadiana was swollen. When crossing a ford the carriage in which the nuns rode was nearly overturned. The saint,

with the ass he rode, was borne across on the surface of the torrent and on the other side of the river the nuns were amazed when they saw him and the poor ass perfectly dry. The water had not touched them.

When they had nearly ended their long journey, and had come within two leagues of Madrid, they heard that a great number of distinguished persons were coming to meet them. St. John of the Cross wished to enter the city unperceived and without noise, so he and Anne of Jesus agreed to stop on the road and thereby avoid so public a reception. They waited till the evening but the roads were bad and night overtook them long before they came to the gates of Madrid. Thus unexpectedly benighted they did not know how to advance, when suddenly they found themselves in the midst of a brilliant light, more brilliant than the light of the sun, which accompanied them till they came to the city, between nine and ten o'clock, 9 September, 1586.

The provincial was there to receive them. From him the servant of God obtained leave to found a monastery in Mancha Real. Then, having done all his obedience in Madrid, he made haste to reach Mancha Real, where he took possession of the house, 12 October. High mass was sung by the archdeacon of Ubeda, who gave the house; the deacon was one of his

nephews, a canon of Toledo, and the sub-deacon was St. John of the Cross.

During one of his many journeys to Mancha Real, St. John was accompanied by Fra Martin of the Assumption and Fra Pedro of St. Mary, a lay brother. In going down the road from Porcuna towards the river, Fra Pedro broke his leg. He was somewhat in advance of the two fathers and when the saint and Fra Martin came up to him they found him in sharp pain, for the shin-bone was broken in two. Fra Martin held the leg and St. John of the Cross, wetting a piece of cloth in his mouth, bound the limb. Then, having put the poor brother on a mule, they led it, one on each side, supporting Fra Pedro as well as they could till they came to an inn. There the saint promised to find some relief for him. Having stopped the mule, the fathers said they would help Fra Pedro to dismount that he might be spared all further pain.

"Pain," said Fra Pedro, "I feel no pain!" and, leaping to the ground, he danced before the saint in the fulness of his joy.

Fra Martin, seeing that the broken limb was not only set but healed, cried out, "A miracle, a manifest miracle!"

"Hush," said the saint, "What do these people here know about miracles?"

He charged the two friars, under pain of disobedience, to hold their tongues and keep secret all they had seen.

During his stay in Mancha Real two women possessed by the devil were brought to him. One was married. He refused to exorcise her and said to those who had brought her that it was not necessary to do so; her deliverance was nigh at hand. They, believing him, went away and not long after saw the prophecy of the saint fulfilled. The other was unmarried and he said that the priests who had begun the exorcisms would work her cure; and so it happened.

Fra Jerome of the Mother of God had accepted a monastery in Gualcazar of which the frairs took possession 24 March, 1585. But for some reason the deeds concerning the foundation had not yet been formally delivered. St. John of the Cross now, by order of the provincial, went thither to secure the deeds. The founders received him with great joy and all the difficulties feared by the friars were overcome without any trouble.

While there the servant of God was attacked by a most severe pain in his side and the physician who came to his relief said he could not recover. The saint, hearing this, said to Fra Martin who was with him, "The hour of death is come to me; I shall, however, have much to suffer in this illness, for the stone is not yet sufficiently polished."

The physician ordered a certain ointment to be prepared and Fra Martin brought it to the saint so quickly that he had no time to prepare himself for it by removing and hiding the instruments of penance which he continually wore. Fra Martin began to apply it to his side and then discovered an iron chain round the body of the saint. But he could see only parts of it, for the flesh covered the rest. He tried to take it away and, in removing it, tore the flesh. Blood flowed abundantly from the wound. The saint suffered sharp pains during the operation of the father but it was nothing in comparison with the pain and shame he felt at the discovery of his penance. Every link of the chain had two sharp points which lacerated the flesh at every movement of his body. St. John confessed to this faithful companion that he had worn it for the last seven years, day and night. Fra Martin kept the chain as a precious relic and, after the death of the saint, God wrought miracles by it.

About this time he was travelling with Fra Pedro of the Mother of God when his further course was stopped by the overflowing of a river whose ford had become dangerous. Many people were there before him waiting for the river to fall and he proposed to wait with them. But he heard an inward voice calling him away. He asked the brother to stay where he was. He

said he would cross notwithstanding the rush of the waters. In midstream the feet of the mule were entangled in some drift-wood and both he and the mule sank beneath the surface. The people cried aloud for help but no human help was possible. St. John took recourse to his unfailing protectress. The amazed people saw him rise and make his way to the opposite bank. The mule too escaped; and the saint, having mounted it, hurried on to an inn on the road leading from Vaena to Jaen.

In the inn was a man dying of wounds given him by the son of the inn-keeper. The saint went to him at once and heard his confession. He remained with him for two hours and helped him to make a good Christian death.

Towards the end of November of this year 1586 he went to Bujalance to make arrangements for the foundation of a monastery. On the road he said to Fra Martin,

"What would your reverence do if we were now travelling among infidels and they were to set upon us and beat us?"

"Bear it patiently, I hope, by the grace of God," was the answer of Fra Martin.

"Bear it patiently?" replied the saint, with holy indignation, "is that your way? Why not desire it and even beg to be cut to pieces for the love of God?"

In Bujalance St. John received an order from the provincial to go to Madrid. It was late at

night, but the saint made preparations at once to set out early the next morning. The season was cold. Rain was falling after a heavy snow. His companion and the inn-keeper labored to persuade him to delay his journey till the weather grew better. He would not listen to their entreaties, saying he could ill expect his religious to obey him if he was disobedient himself. Before dawn the next morning he was on his way to Madrid.

Before he left Bujalance he commissioned Fra Diego of the Conception to make the foundation in Caravaca concerning which the Mother Anne of St. Albert had spoken to him in the beginning of this year. Fra Diego took possession of the house 18 December, 1586.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIFTH

MIRACULOUS LIGHT. THE CHAPTER OF VALLADOLID. ELECTION OF THE SAINT AS PRIOR OF GRANADA. PICTURE OF THE SAINT. HE FORETELLS THE CANONIZATION OF ST. TERESA.

The servant of God remained in Madrid till the beginning of March, 1587, when he went to Caravaca to preside at the election of a prioress in the place of Mother Anne of St. Albert. On the day of the election he said mass in the church of the monastery. While he was at the altar the nuns saw a wonderful light around him. Two of them, who were nearest to the grating, thought the light came from the tabernacle, and one of these two, doubting the reality of the vision, went to another grating nearer the altar, and there saw the same vision.

This nun had not been able to decide for whom she should vote in the chapter and was in great perplexity and distress of mind. But, as she was looking on and marvelling at the heavenly light, she heard an inward voice bidding her to do what the saint should suggest to her. After mass she went to him and told him how much she was troubled about the election and he told her what she was to do. All her scruples and anxieties vanished in a moment

and she was conscious of a great interior peace.

When the nuns were assembled in chapter for the election, the servant of God came in and preached to them for some time. They saw again the wondrous light which they had seen during mass. The whole choir was flooded with it and the nuns were filled with a wonderful joy. Then the election was made in great peace and when all was over the saint said to them,

"Children, may God reward you! And I thank you, for you have done according to his will."

One of the nuns, Barbara of the Holy Ghost, suffered much from inward unrest, but she kept her secret and never spoke to any one of her trouble. The saint sent for her a few days after the election and said,

"Child, why do you hide your sorrows? But as you are silent yourself, I will tell them."

He told her all her troubles and bade her be of good courage because all would end well and her soul would be in peace. The prophecy was fulfilled to the letter.

From Caravaca he went to Valladolid, summoned thither by the provincial. There, 7 April, the definitors, of whom he was one, met and transacted certain business in preparation for the assembling of the provincial chapter which was held on Friday the seventeenth.

When St. John of the Cross was released from his duties as vicar of Andalusia he hoped

to be allowed to live under obedience, undistinguished among his brethren. It was not yet so to be. He was forthwith elected prior of Granada. When he learned the choice of the chapter he fell on his knees before the assembled fathers and begged his brethren to have pity on him and suffer him to attend to his own soul without the charge of the souls of others. He wept in the soreness of his distress, but the tears of the wearied saint did not move his brethren. He was compelled to accept the priorate, and so, with a heavy heart, went back to Granada, to the great joy of the friars and of the nuns who were there.

Relieved from the burden of making visitation of the province, he gave himself up solely to work in the monastery, in which he was now prior for the third time. He finished building the house, supplied it with water, planted a vineyard, and made it a pattern of all the houses of the order. In the whole of Spain there was not another to surpass it in its fitness and convenience. He himself labored with his own hands, mixed the mortar and laid the bricks, choosing for himself what the workmen regarded as the least honorable part of their duty. He sent to Medina for his brother, Francis de Yepes, and employed him as a laborer. Whenever any of the great personages of Granada came to the monastery to visit the prior

he never failed to show them his brother at his work, or, if that could not be done, he would find some excuse to bring him into the room where he would speak of him as the person most dear to him upon earth.

Some friends of the saint desired to have a picture of his and begged the friars to help them to obtain it. The friars knew too well that he would never consent to their wishes, so they resolved to take his picture by stealth. That was easy enough. They brought the painter to his cell when he was in a trance and in that way the work was done. Some time afterwards the saint found out what had been done and was greatly hurt and grieved; with the friars he was even angry.

In the processes of his canonization it was deposed that he had been three times disturbed. This was one of them. Another was when conversation fell upon what he and Fra Antonio had done for the order in Duruelo. The third time was in his last illness when the surgeon punctured his foot to obtain some relief for him. One of the punctures was in that part of the foot which was pierced by the nail of the crucifixion. The friar who waited on him said our Lord had admitted him to share in his sufferings, of which the wound in the foot was an outward sign. The holy man, whose humility never slumbered, became angry; for he thought the friar was comparing him with St. Francis.

If the servant of God, in his humility, tried to hide the sanctity of his life from the eyes of men, God himself willed to make it manifest from time to time. One day a great personage in Granada, who did not know the saint but had heard much of him, resolved to put the popular rumor to test. He went to him and laid before him the state of his own soul. He learned so much in that conversation, and beheld so much grace in the servant of God, that he was afterwards wont to say, "Oh, what treasures God has laid up in that man! I had heard much of him, but what I had heard is as nothing compared to what I now know!"

The nuns in the monasteries he visited gathered the fragments of his food and treasured them as something divinely touched.

One of the friars persuaded him to give up his habit, now worn threadbare, and put on another which was new. The prior consented and the friar, out of devotion, put on the discarded habit himself. But it brought down upon him the censures of his brethren. They said he carried perfumes about his person. He defended himself as well as he could and continued to wear the habit. At last the friars ascertained the cause of the strange fragrance and thus came to realize that whatever touched the lacerated flesh of the saintly prior gave forth a delicious smell.

He foretold the canonization of St. Teresa at this time, before any steps had been taken in the order or elsewhere for that end. It happened in this way: In March, 1588, during recreation in the monastery of Granada, Fra Juan of the Holy Angels said he had dreamed the night before that they were keeping the feast of their holy mother and that they had sung the divine office in her honor. He was laughing at himself and his dream, but the prior spoke seriously to him and begged him not to make that a matter of mirth. He said he would see his dream fulfilled before he died. Fra Juan was no longer a young man and gave little heed to the words of the prior, but he lived to be an older man and saw not only the beatification but also the canonization of St. Teresa, in the year 1622.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIXTH

THE FIRST GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE REFORM. ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS MADE FIRST CONSULTOR AND PRIOR OF SEGOVIA. DEATH OF CATHERINE ALVAREZ. AUSTERITIES AND PRAYER OF THE SAINT. THE MYSTERIOUS DOVE.

In June, 1588, St. John of the Cross, obeying the summons of the provincial, was present at the chapter held in Madrid. A great change was there made in the order. His Holiness Sixtus V had sanctioned a further separation of the friars of the reform from the friars of the mitigated observance. The brief of the Pope, dated 10 July, 1587, was brought to Spain the same year and notice of it was given to the provincial by the nuncio. The provincial then called the definitors together and laid before them a copy of the brief. They all agreed that a chapter of the province should be held for the formal acceptance and publication of it and accordingly the chapter was summoned to meet in Madrid 10 June, 1588.

After reading the Papal brief the chapter proceeded to put it in execution. There were to be six consultors. Of this number the first chosen was St. John of the Cross who was also

elected prior of the house in Segovia founded by his penitent, Dona Ana de Penasola. As it was judged inexpedient that the consultors should sit in Madrid, lest the court should interfere with them and influence their resolutions, Segovia was made the seat of the council. St. John of the Cross was to be its president in the absence of the vicar-general.

He went to Segovia in the beginning of August and began his work by rebuilding the monastery in a more healthful spot. Although one of the chiefs of the order and the prior of the house, he was to be seen daily toiling among the workmen. His own cell was the poorest in the monastery, a small closet under the staircase, dimly lighted, in which with difficulty could be found a place for his bed and none for a writing table. He had no books at any time in his cell except the breviary and the holy Scriptures. All his time not occupied in the business of the house was spent in the hollow of a rock in the garden. But he could not long remain there, the interruptions were so many and so continuous. People came in crowds to the monastery to see the prior. He never at any time refused to see them, but he would complain gently, to the father who called him, against these hindrances to prayer. He went with reluctance to converse with people who broke into his conversation with God.

Though thus continually devoted to prayer, he neglected nothing. As if to reward him and to supplement his seeming want of attention to business, God revealed to him the secrets of men's souls.

One day he met two of his friars talking together and said to them, "Why think ye evil in your hearts?"

They defended themselves, but he reproved them sharply and told them they had been rashly judging one of their brethren; which was true. Another friar, tempted by satan, was about to leave the monastery one night when the others in the house were supposed to be asleep. He had made all his preparations and had even laid a ladder against the outer wall of the enclosure. The saint, who was awake in prayer, knowing by revelation from God what the friar was doing and intending to do, went to the cell of one of the fathers and begged him to go down into the garden and remove the ladder, but without speaking a word to any one, not even if he found another friar near the ladder. The father went down to the garden and found the poor friar there with one foot on the ladder, bent on going forth into the world he had left. But when he saw the father lay his hand on the ladder as if about to remove it, and at the same time seeming not to recognize his presence, he felt that the father

was there by order of the prior and that God had made his sin known to him. He entered into himself and, bitterly repenting of his evil imaginations, led a life of great penance afterwards and persevered in the order till his death.

At this time the mother of the saint died in Medina del Campo, poor but not forgotten, because St. Teresa had charged the nuns there to see that the mother of her first-born son in Carmel should be provided with all that was needed. The nuns fulfilled with the utmost faithfulness the charge laid upon them by St. Teresa. When Catherine Alvarez died she was buried with the religious of the house. The monastery regarded the possession of her body as the endowment of a great treasure, so holy was her life and death. It does not appear the saint ever saw her after he said his first mass. When he heard of her death he summoned his brother to Segovia. The two brothers loved one another with a love passing the love of brothers, for each helped the other to love God more and more, and poverty above all earthly goods. Francis came. When the two brothers were speaking together about their mother they fell into a trance and saw her in a vision and heard her speak of the glory to which God had raised her.

The servant of God had borne the heat of the day in his order, constantly employed in gov-

erning others, and was now longing more than ever for a little rest; but there was to be none for him, even when relieved from the burden of office.

He spent so little time in sleep and treated his body with such extreme severity that his brethren feared for his life. Every night, before matins and after, he would retire into the most lonely part of the house to take the discipline. But through the silence of the night the sound of the lash would reach the ears of the friars, who trembled when they heard it, knowing well how merciless he was to himself. They could not venture to interfere openly, for he was their superior. Therefore they had recourse to a little artifice, carrying a light to the neighborhood so that their father could be seen. They did this so often that at last he complained to his old friend and companion, Fra Martin of the Assumption.

"I am not a child that cannot take care of itself," he said, "why do they persecute me in this way?"

When the saint was living in Granada a dove of wonderful beauty and brilliant plumage, with a golden circle round its throat, was often seen hovering over his cell. Now in Segovia the people saw it again. It was silent, never cooing, a solitary bird never mingling with its kind, and generally near the cell of the saint or over it.

The dove was visible not only to the friars but also to the seculars. It was a subject of conversation among the friars that the mysterious dove followed the saint and remained with him wherever he might be. It disappeared from Segovia, as it had done from Granada, when the saint went away, but was seen in Andalusia, whither he retired when he resigned his priorate.

So continual was his prayer that he had to do violence to himself when people came to speak to him of their own affairs. One night when the religious were all in their cells he went down to the church and prayed before a picture of our Lord carrying his cross. The sight of this picture always moved the saint to great devotion. During his prayer a voice spoke to him, as if coming from the picture, saying,

"John, what shall I give thee for all thou hast done and suffered for me?"

The holy man was startled. As he was not only humble but also wary in the matter of revelations and visions, he looked round to see if anybody were in the church who could have uttered the words. Like St. Teresa, he was always afraid of delusions.

He saw no one; for, indeed, he was the only one there. But, not trusting his ears, he made no answer and continued to pray. The words were again uttered and the saint, still distrust-

ful, continued to pray. He heard the same words the third time. Then he made the wondrous answer,

"To suffer and to be held in contempt for thy sake."

It was what he always longed for, the only wish of his heart on earth.

His earnest and continuous prayer was to obtain three graces, First, to be relieved of every office in the order and to be subject, before he died, to a superior who would not be gentle with him. Second, that he might suffer for the love of God. Third, to die in humiliation and unknown.

The fervent prayer of the holy man was heard.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVENTH

Discontent of the Nuns. Resolution of the Friars. St. John of the Cross Neglected by His Brethren. Retires to Penuela. Miracles.

Fra Nicolas introduced a new way of governing the order. It consisted in bringing before an assemblage of seven fathers all questions and affairs, including the petty faults and imperfections of the friars and nuns. This at once occasioned great disturbance, not only among the nuns, but also among the friars. The nuns believed themselves to have been seriously wronged and were not silent. They had nothing to say against the members of the council separately, whom they respected, but they could not bear that their shortcomings should be brought to the knowledge of seven men instead of one.

In their distress they went out of the order for help, probably expecting to find none among the friars. Foremost among the discontented was the Venerable Anne of Jesus, prioress of Madrid. In her judgment the nuns should be under the government of one superior, not under that of many. She consulted three great friends of St. Teresa, Don Teutonio, archbishop

of Evora, the great Dominican doctor, Fra Dominic Banez, and Fra Luis de Leon, who at her request and with her help had published the works of St. Teresa, foundress of the reform.

These grave and learned men were asked two questions. First, is it lawful for the nuns to make known in Rome the troubles they are in? And, second, is it expedient? They answered at once saying that it was lawful, for every subject may appeal to his superior always and under all circumstances, and expedient, because the troubles and trials of the nuns would be thereby ended. The Venerable Anne sent to Rome a dignified and skilful priest, Dr. Marmol, a relative of Fra Jerome of the Mother of God. He obtained from the pontiff a brief in favor of the nuns.

Fra Nicolas was greatly offended by this action of the nuns and called his council to determine what was to be done. The chapter resolved that when the brief came they would cease to have anything to do with the nuns and would resign their direction. It was a harsh decision. If the nuns had acted amiss, the friars of St. Teresa might have been more patient with their elder sisters.

Seeing the great disturbance in the reformed family of Carmel, King Philip II obtained from his holiness Gregory XIV revocation of the brief in question, issued by Sixtus V, April,

1591. At Pentecost Fra Nicolas held a chapter of the order in Madrid where peace was established between him and the nuns.

St. John of the Cross had much to suffer at this time and he suffered in silence. The Venerable Anne of Jesus was a nun whom he highly honored. He had great confidence in her and she in him. Owing to this friendship the vicar general and many of the friars suspected St. John of having fostered the spirit of rebellion among the nuns. Their suspicion was, of course, utterly unjust. Thus matters stood when the word of Fra Nicolas reached St. John of the Cross in Segovia, commanding his presence at the chapter to be opened in June, 1591. Before quitting Segovia he went to take leave of the nuns, knowing he would see them no more. On their saying he would return from the chapter as provincial, he replied pleasantly, that God would not punish the province so heavily. Then he added that the chapter would make no account of him and would throw him into a corner out of the way.

The first sign of opposition was manifest in the elections. Nobody in the chapter gave his vote for the first friar of the reform. When the elections were over and the affairs of the order came up for discussion, St. John of the Cross represented that the decrees and constitutions were too many and some of them at variance

with the others. He also spoke in favor of Fra Jerome and urged upon his brethren the necessity of dealing tenderly with the nuns. The order should remember, he said, that they were the cherished children of St. Teresa and great allowance should be made for them in the troubles which had arisen.

This defence of the nuns confirmed the suspicion rife among the friars that the saint was in league with them. Fra Nicolas, as a rebuke to the nuns, deprived him of office as provincial. Thus St. John of the Cross at once became a simple friar without rank or authority among his brethren.

Finding himself at last in the very state for which he had so earnestly longed, free from the cares and honors of office, St. John of the Cross gave thanks to God. The first use he made of his freedom was to ask the vicar to allow him to retire to Penuela, one of the most austere houses in the order. The vicar gave him leave to do so, but a few days afterwards the friars learned that the brief had been cancelled and that there would be no further opposition on the part of the nuns. This changed the whole matter. There was no reason now for continuing the disgrace of the saint. Fra Nicolas was very sorry that he had been carried away by his zeal and now, seeing that he had been hard and unkind in his treatment of St. John of the

Cross, who was one of the pillars of the order, tried to persuade him to return as prior of Segovia and forego his purpose of retiring to Penuela; but he could not prevail. The servant of God had obtained what he had so earnestly prayed for and he was now going to take possession of his rest. Henceforth he was to live unknown and despised, thirsting for the chalice which our Lord had so lovingly promised him. He was free at last.

He went to Segovia from Madrid but tarried there only a day or two. His friends gathered round him and begged him to remain. To all of them he replied with his wonted tenderness, that it was not possible. Dona Ana de Mercado y Penasola, his friend and penitent, entreated him at least to promise to return. He was equally deaf to the prayers of that saintly widow. At last he said to her,

"No, I shall never return. But one day you will bring me back."

The words were afterwards fulfilled, as we shall see later on.

In July of this year 1591 he reached Penuela, to the great joy of the friars there who, with their prior, Fra Diego of the Incarnation, once his novice, contrived to become novices again under him. He spent his whole time in prayer. In the morning after mass he would ask leave of the prior to go up the mountain. There he re-

mained till he heard the bell for vespers. He would then return and, after vespers, he would go again and return for the evening prayer.

One of his penitents found him on the mountain and said to him,
"Is it possible you can always like to be amid these rocks?"

The saint replied humbly, "You must not be surprised, for I have less to confess when I am amidst these rocks than when I am among men."

The prior of Penuela testified afterwards that the servant of God lived in the house as obedient as a novice and his austerities were so great that his continuing to live was in itself a miracle. His sleep was so brief that his prayer was unbroken. Whenever any one went to his cell he was always found on his knees.

One day a violent tempest arose. The sky was darkened and the thunder roared. The ground was furrowed by a raging storm of rain and hail. The whole community was alarmed; but the saint was unmoved. He came down from his cell and, in the sight of the terrified fathers, took off his cowl and with it made the sign of the cross four times towards the four quarters of the heavens. At once the clouds departed and no sign of the storm remained.

But his bodily strength was gone from him. The wasted frame confessed that the spirit within was stronger than itself. And now, worn out by his unceasing penances, he received an order from the council to go to the Indies! His brethren in Penuela, seeing how unreasonable, under the circumstances, such an order was, begged him to represent to the friars who had sent it, the ruined state of his health. He would not do it and said that to die under obedience would be his joy.

He then added, "Would you have me not drink the chalice which my Father has sent me?"

His brethren could do no more, and he at once wrote to Fra John of St. Anne to find the twelve friars who would go with him to the Indies.

But while Fra John was searching for these companions, God himself laid his hands on his servant and sent him a burning fever to consume his body, to balance the other fever that was consuming his most pure soul.

He could not conceal this illness. Fra Antonio of Jesus, provincial of upper Andalusia, his companion in Duruelo where the order began, having heard of it, wrote to him and begged him to remove to Baeza or to Ubeda where he could be attended in his sickness better than in Penuela. He also charged the prior of Penuela

to see that his orders were obeyed. The prior and the friars begged him to choose Baeza. They knew he would be well cared for there, since he was the founder of the house. Besides, the prior of Baeza, Fra Angel of the Presentation, had a great affection for the servant of God. On the other hand, the prior of Ubeda was known to be otherwise disposed and, indeed, to be very unfriendly to the saint. It is not probable that Fra Antonio knew anything of this prior's dislike of St. John of the Cross. But St. John of the Cross knew it and that was decisive with him. He chose at once to put himself in the hands of the prior of Ubeda and asked to be sent thither.

Thither he went, but with great difficulty, because of his bodily weakness, beginning his journey 31 September, 1591.

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHTH

A Great Cross. Illness. Journey to Ubeda. Harshness of the Prior of Ubeda.

While the saint was living in Penuela and our Lord was publishing his marvelous sanctity by great miracles, envy was at work defaming him as a sinner. When he was provincial of Andalusia, two friars, esteemed as the greatest preachers in Spain, were chosen by God as the weavers of his crown. The first was Fra Diego of the Evangelist. He had taken offense because the holy father once reprimanded him for non-observance of the discipline of Carmel, and conceived against the saint a great dislike and even hatred. Having now become definitor general and having received from the definitors a commission to investigate the conduct of another religious in three or four convents of Andalusia, he tried to extend his commission to the investigation of the conduct of our saint. He went throughout Andalusia from convent to convent asking such disgraceful questions about the saint that the friars and nuns of those convents were greatly scandalized. At last he went so far as to threaten to expell the saint from the order of which he was main founder.

Most people were shocked by so much malice. The more timid, afraid of Fra Diego, suffered in silence. Others were indignant and blamed even their superiors, for they could not believe that Fra Diego was acting thus publicly without authority from them.

When Fra Diego had collected his materials, he sent them into the council and to the vicar general. But when Fra Nicolas saw the papers and ascertained what they were, he indignantly threw them away and said the visitor had not been commissioned to interfere in this matter, nor was what he pretended to find out possible to Fra John of the Cross.

Fra Nicolas did not punish Fra Diego. He reserved his fault for the consideration of the next general chapter. Into that chapter Fra Nicolas never came, for he died before it was assembled. His successor, Fra Elias of St. Martin, burned the papers before all the chapter and punished Fra Diego, bewailing and execrating the fact that there should be in the order a man who, worse than Cham, son of Noe, not only would discover, but even devise, dishonor against his father. This punishment was considered sufficient by men, and some of his friends, seeing him humbled, tried to make him provincial of Andalusia, rather than bury, they said, a man of such great talents. And so he was elected provincial of Andalusia, though at

the great displeasure of many of the fathers. But the Lord did not allow Fra Diego to reach Andalusia. He was taken ill in Alcala la Real on his way to his province and there he died.

The servant of God was in the midst of the furnace of this persecution when God sent him his last illness in Penuela. He had concealed his state for a fortnight from all in the house, but at last the swelling of his foot was discovered, and the friars were alarmed. They informed the provincial of the state he was in. Fra Antonio, who could not then go to Penuela, wrote a consoling letter to the saint, as it was said before, begging him to leave for Baeza or Ubeda.

The servant of God, thirsting for the chalice of suffering, chose, as before stated, Ubeda, to the great distress of Fra Diego of the Incarnation, who remembered that the prior of that house was Fra Francis of St. Chrysostom, the learned and popular preacher, whom the saint had corrected in Seville at the same time and in the same way he had aroused the animosity of Fra Diego.

A lay brother, Fra Francis of St. Hilarion, was also unwell and the prior of Penuela wished to send him with the saint to Ubeda. Brother Francis, knowing this, went to St. John of the Cross and begged him to change his resolution and go to Baeza. The saint would not throw

away the cross which was within his grasp; therefore he would not listen to the brother; but he would not take him into the furnace against his will; so he persuaded the prior to send the brother to Baeza, while he persevered in his intention to go to Ubeda.

The journey from Penuela to Ubeda was to be his last and St. John of the Cross wished to make it on foot in company with a lay-brother. But he was too sick and he was placed on an ass. When they came near the bridge over the Guadalimar, the brother said he might dismount and rest under the shadow of the bridge and take something to eat.

"I should be very glad," replied the saint, "of a little rest, but as for eating, I can eat nothing."

"Is there nothing then," asked the brother, "that your reverence could eat?"

The saint said he could eat some asparagus, but where to find that at this season of the year?

At the bridge he dismounted with the help of the brother and, having sat down in the shade, he continued his conversation, always marvelous, about God.

While looking at the river they saw on a jutting stone close by them a bundle of asparagus, tied with twigs.

The brother was amazed at the sight and seized the asparagus. The servant of God suggested, lest he should discern the miracle, that somebody might have left it there and made him look around to see if there was any one in sight. The brother obeyed but there was nobody to be seen. The saint then consented to his keeping it but on condition that he leave some money on the stone by way of compensation to the owner if any should appear. The brother did as he was bid and took the asparagus to Ubeda where the friars looked at it with wonder.

On his arrival the saint was very ill. The friars in the house were very glad to see him, but the prior was not moved to compassion at his pitiable sight. He had neither forgotten nor forgiven the saint and he was less disposed to serve him now because the order seemed to be weary of him and one of the definitors was seeking proofs of grave charges against him for the purpose of driving him out. Thus, under a cloud, the saint came to the house of an unfriendly prior, in great bodily suffering, and beyond the reach of all the friends who would have succored him had they been near at hand.

The journey had made him much worse. Next day there were no less than five running sores on his foot. The surgeon, Martin de

Villarael, saw no way of relief except by cutting the flesh, which he did, leaving bare the bones. When the surgeon had done his work, the saint told him that he was ready to suffer more if more sufferings were in store for him. The pain of his disease seemed to have grown ever greater, yet he never spoke but to give thanks to God. For every little help given by the infirmarian he was always grateful, begging his forgiveness for the trouble he gave him. But when the pain was more severe than usual he would say, "This is my rest forever," as if praying to God never to let him be at ease again in this world, so great was his thirst for suffering.

The prior of the house, blinded by passion, refused even the ordinary assistance to the saint. He would go to see him from time to time, but not to comfort him; nor did he conceal from him that he had not yet forgiven him the correction ministered in Seville.

Some pious ladies, when they heard of his painful illness, undertook to wash the linen used in dressing his sores, for the monastery could not do it so well. This act of charity became known to the prior and was instantly forbidden. He would not allow such excessive indulgence, he said; it was against the poverty of the order. The friars were greatly hurt at this unnecessary strictness and, on the urgent

representations of some of them, the prior consented to leave the matter alone.

The prior had strictly forbidden the friars to visit the saint without his leave and that leave he refused absolutely to all whom he thought the saint would be glad to see.

The prior of Penuela, who came to see the saint, was greatly distressed at the treatment he was undergoing. He knew it was an act of great forbearance on the part of the saint that the harsh prior had not been more severely punished in Seville for his careless life. And now the prior was returning evil for good to one of the chief pillars of the order.

At last the prior, to harrass the saint still further, removed the infirmarian from his office and charged him to do nothing more for the sick. Fra Bernardo obeyed, as he was bound to do, but he found means to send a message to the provincial, Fra Antonio, the old companion of the saint, and to let him know how the first friar who put on the habit of reform was treated in the monastery of Ubeda.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINTH

Fra Antonio Visits the Saint. The Prior Relents. Dona Clara de Benavides. Ines and Catherine de Salazar.

When Fra Antonio of Jesus received the message of Fra Bernardo, he came in all haste to Ubeda, greatly displeased with the prior and full of sorrow on account of the servant of God. He reprimanded the prior with great severity even before he went to the infirmary to console the saint. There he saw a sight which moved him profoundly. He wished others to see it as well as himself. The door of the infirmary was opened and all the friars were bidden to enter that they might see their brother. He then told the prior that they ought to open even the gates of the monastery for all the world to come and see a saint. Fra Antonio knew the treasure which the house possessed, though the prior could not. He charged the infirmarian to see that all the wants of the saint were supplied and to supply them even if the prior should fall back again into his former hardness of heart. He, Fra Antonio, would find means to defray all the charges, whatever they might be. Fra Antonio remained a few days in the monastery and went away.

But his visit changed the prior's feelings

toward the saint, and this was felt throughout the monastery. The prior, after the reprimand of the provincial, entered into himself and resolved to be more charitable to the saint and to all. He went to the infirmary and, with tears in his eyes, begged the saint's forgiveness and his counsel in the direction of the house.

Seeing how the prior himself treated the saint with kindness, the infirmarian asked the saint to allow him to bring some music into the next room, that he might hear it and thereby forget for a while the great pain he was suffering. The servant of God would not consent to any such devices. He would suffer thankfully as God willed it, he said, and seek no means of relief until it pleased God himself to send them. The infirmarian insisted the second and the third time and then the saint, just to please him, consented. The musicians were brought in. When they had played for some time the infirmarian went to the saint and asked him how he liked the music. The servant of God said that he had not heard it. He had been in a trance the whole time, occupied with God in prayer, his ears sealed to all earthly sounds. He begged that the musicians might not be further troubled; he was grateful to them for their kindness and to the father who had brought them to the house, but he would

not mix, he said, the consolations of earth with the consolations of heaven, and then added, with the Psalmist, "I shall be satisfied when thy glory shall appear."

He was no longer cut off from his brethren. They had been allowed to visit him ever since the visit of the provincial. The friars were filled with wonder at his serenity. His whole body was now covered with sores. One day the saint spoke of the sufferings of Job, who "with a shell scraped the corruption, sitting on a dunghill." When he had said these words, he turned to the fathers who were present and said, "Ah, that was suffering indeed! But I am lying on a good bed, not on a dunghill, and, instead of a shell, they give me clean linen to cleanse my sores. My sufferings are nothing. Our Lord has laid his hand lightly upon me, yea, rather one of his fingers. He has but gently and leniently touched me."

To him his sufferings were a joy. He not only accepted them as great graces from our Lord, but as answers to lifelong prayers.

One of the principal ladies in the place, Dona Clara de Benavides, heard of the illness of the saint and his wonderful patience in his trials. She had never seen him, nor even heard of him before medical men told her of his sufferings. Dona Clara wished to be of service to him and asked her husband's permission to send him

some provisions out of their house. Her husband, Don Bartholomew, instantly consented, and Dona Clara sent food to the monastery. In a day or two the saint found out that the food could not have been dressed in the house. So when it was brought to him he would not take it. If he died, he said to the prior, for want of food, his death would be less evil to the order than the laxity that might creep in if the food was dressed outside the monastery. Dona Clara, on being informed of the resolution, submitted. But she sent to the monastery everything that could be wanted, including lint and bandages for the service of the dying saint.

Dona Clara was near confinement. When she heard how grateful the saint was for her charitable services, she sent to beg him to pray for her in her coming illness. She dreaded it very much and her heart grew sad as the time was nearing. The servant of God prayed and then sent her word saying to cast away all her fears and her pains would be few and her child would be admitted to the vision of God. His words were fulfilled after his death. Dona Clara's illness was light and within a year the little girl she had brought into the world left it for her everlasting home.

Two pious ladies in the neighborhood, having heard of the saint's distressing illness, offered themselves to take the soiled linen and bandages

to their own house and wash them. Their offer was accepted and accordingly all the linen necessary for the saint was taken to the house of Ines and Catherine Salazar. They were delicate women and not accustomed to what they saw when the linen was brought to them. The cloths were saturated with corruption. But the ladies, contrary to their expectations, perceived a perfume of most wondrous fragrance instead of the odor natural to corruption. They were filled with a strange joy for which they could not account, and their labor, which had promised to be irksome, became to them a most agreeable occupation of their leisure.

One day Ines de Salazar not only missed the accustomed fragrance but perceived a most unpleasing and offensive smell which made her ill. She was unable to do her work and went to her mother and told her either St. John of the Cross must be dying or the friars had sent cloths used by some other person. Soon after a lay-brother came to the house and he, being asked whether the bandages used by any other father had been sent with those of the saint, confessed that the friars had sent some which were for the service of Fra Mathew of the Blessed Sacrament, who had a sore on one of his shoulders. These the sisters separated without difficulty from those of the saint, which still sent forth the fragrance of flowers.

CHAPTER THIRTIETH

THE APPROACH OF DEATH. HUMILITY OF THE SAINT. FRA ANTONIO COMES TO HIM. THE LAST SACRAMENTS. DEATH.

The saint was nearly worn out. God had heard his prayer and had plunged him into the furnace of tribulation. There he laid from the end of September till Saturday, the eve of the Immaculate Conception, 1591. The surgeon in attendance told him that he had but few days of life left to him. The saint answered with joyful face, in the words of the Psalmist, Laetatus sum in his quae dicta sunt mihi, in domum Domini ibimus. "I have been made glad by what they said to me, we shall go into the house of the Lord."

He then, after a momentary pause, added, "Since I have heard these good tidings I feel no pain whatever."

The surgeon thought the end so near that he advised the friars to give him the last sacraments without delay; but the saint, when they repeated this to him, asked them to wait a few days. He would warn them in time, he said.

A messenger was sent at once to the provincial, Fra Antonio, who, with the saint, had begun the reform in Duruelo. The old man came without delay.

In the beginning of the following week the dying saint asked the friars what day it was. A little later he asked how long it was to Saturday. He saw that they had guessed his meaning and, to turn their attention away, he added that he was thinking how on that day our Lady helped her religious in a special way. But his explanation had no effect in the minds of his brethren for they believed that our Lady had made known to him that he would die on Saturday within the octave of her great feast.

On Thursday morning he asked Fra Bartholomew of St. Basil, who was continually with him during the latter part of his illness, to take a small bag that was under his pillow and burn the papers which were in it. There were letters he had received from his friends. He would not leave them behind for fear of annoyance to them. When the papers had been all destroyed, he asked for the viaticum. In the evening, at the same hour in which our Lord instituted the holy mass, the friars brought the master to his servant who, before receiving him, begged his brethren to forgive the bad example he had given to them and then, not seeing the prior among them, sent him a message, requesting him, for the love of God, to come to him. The prior came and the saint whom he had wronged asked his forgiveness and begged him to overlook his faults. He

was sorry, he said, for the trouble he had given and for the expense to the house, but he would do all he could to make compensation, praying our Lord to repay them after his death.

His prayer was the prayer of the just and the house prospered. Soon it became one of the best in the province. The saint had before this told the sub-prior the house would prosper and it was then believed in the monastery that the servant of God had received from our Lord an assurance that his prayer would be heard.

The prior's heart was melted and his tears flowed at the remembrance of his harsh treatment of the servant of God and of the patient endurance with which the treatment was endured. The saint begged one further grace of him, namely, a habit to be buried in. That was all he asked. He possessed nothing himself. When the friars asked him to distribute among them those things which might be said to belong to him, such as his breviary, his rosary and his habit, because they wished to have them as relics, he answered them simply,

"I am poor and have nothing of my own. Everything about me belongs to the superior. Ask him."

Thus he remembered his vow to the moment of his death.

On the feast of St. Lucy, Friday, 13 December, he asked those who were with him what

day of the week it was. They told him Friday. He did not ask again the name of the day but only from time to time what hour it was. At one in the afternoon, when they told him what hour it was, he said, "I asked because, glory be to God, I have to chant matins in heaven tonight."

He became now deeply recollected and was from time to time in a trance. His eyes were generally closed, that he might be more intent upon heavenly things. But sometimes he opened them, only to look most lovingly on the crucifix before him.

That Friday was spent on the cross with our Lord, for the servant of God entered into the night of spiritual desolation and his soul was filled with darkness, in addition to great corporal pains. He lay on his poor bed, the poorest of men, utterly detached from all things, cleaving only to God who visited him with his love and, wounding him anew, left him alone in the most terrible abandonment, beyond the reach of all possible consolation.

On that day the provincial, Fra Antonio of Jesus, arrived and went at once to visit him. St. John of the Cross was very glad to see him, but he could not speak because of the pain he was suffering both in soul and body. At last, lest the provincial should be distressed, he turned to him and begged him to forgive his

silence, which was caused by his severe sufferings.

Fra Antonio tried to console him and spoke of his labors in the order and of the great reward he was about to receive. Thereupon the saint stopped his ears with his feeble hands and cried,

"Oh my father, do not speak of that! Speak rather of my many and grievous sins! I think only of them and of the merits of my Redeemer."

A little later Fra Augustine of St. Joseph came to console him and said he would soon be rewarded for what he had done. The saint cried out as before in great distress,

"O my father, do not speak of that! There is nothing I ever did that is not a source of shame to me at this moment."

About five o'clock in the evening he asked for the last anointing. During the administration of the sacrament he made all the responses himself. Some time afterwards he asked them what hour it was. He was told that it was nine o'clock.

He said, "Ah, I have three hours to wait."

And then, in a voice of most touching humility, he repeated the words of the Psalmist, Incolatus meus prolongatus est. "My stay is prolonged."

He remained silent till a bell rang at ten o'clock; he asked what it was. They told him it was the bell of a monastery of the nuns ringing for matins.

He said, "I too, by the goodness of God, shall sing them with our Lady in heaven."

Then addressing himself to her, he said, "I thank thee, O my Lady and my Queen, because it pleases thee to let me quit this world on Saturday, thine own day."

At eleven o'clock he sat up on his bed and said, "Blessed be God, how well I am!"

He seemed to be in perfect health of body and asked them to sing the praises of God with him. He was very joyous. Those who were present, among them seculars, formed themselves into a choir. The saint began the Miserere and they answered. After this they recited other Psalms in the same way, the saint from time to time kissing the crucifix which he held in his hands.

At half past eleven he said it was time to call the community. The bell rung and the friars came with the provincial, his old friend and companion. The old man of fourscore years and more fell on his knees and, for himself and for the whole community, begged him to bless them before he went and to remember them when he should see the face of God. The saint said he would never forget them, but as for blessing them, he could not do it. That

belonged to the father of them all, the provincial there present. But the friars asked him again and the provincial commanded the dying saint to satisfy his own and their desire.

Then, obedient to the end, St. John of the Cross lifted up his hand and made the sign of the cross while the whole assembly wept tears of sorrow and joy.

Fra Alonzo of the Mother of God began to make the recommendation of the passing soul. When he stopped for a while the saint said,

"Go on, pray for me to God!"

Then he pressed to his lips the crucifix in his hands, and closed his eyes in prayer. It was now close upon midnight. Among the friars round him he saw Fra Francis, whose duty it was to ring the bell for matins. He said to him,

"Go and ring for matins."

A great radiant orb was seen by those present encircling the dying saint, the light of which was so brilliant as to dim the other lights in the room. In a minute or two afterwards, awaking up as if from a deep sleep, the saint asked what the bell was ringing for.

They said for matins.

He looked at them and smiled, as if taking leave of them, and said, "I am going to sing them in Paradise."

He kissed the crucifix, closed his eyes and said,

"In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum."

He passed away as a child falling asleep in his mother's arms. There was no agony nor struggle. God took him gently to himself, Saturday morning, 14 December, 1591, in the fiftieth year of his age.

He had been twenty-eight years in religion, five of which he spent in the old observance, and twenty-three in the reform of St. Teresa.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIRST

THE FUNERAL. SERMON. INCORRUPTION OF THE BODY. TRANSLATION TO MADRID AND SEGOVIA.

The religious and seculars present in the infirmary, seeing that the saint was dead, fell upon him with one consent, and having kissed his hands and feet, began to rob him of the habit he wore and the linen rags that covered his sores. They took away from his head, which was almost bald, the little hair spared by the tonsure. Even the rope that hung from the ceiling, by which he used to move himself in his bed, was taken down and seized upon as relics and memorials of a saint. The prior saved his leather girdle from the common spoil and afterwards gave it to Dona Clara. To her husband, Don Bartholomew de Ortega, he gave the breviary which the saint had used during his lifetime.

While the friars were thus occupied, the death of the saint became known in divers places. Dona Clara, asleep in her bed, awoke suddenly and, rousing her husband, said to him that Fra Juan de la Cruz was dead. She confessed she did not see him but she was sure he had been that minute in the room.

The tolling of the bell roused the whole town. The instant the people heard it, they knew that it announced to them the departure of the saint. They hurried to the monastery and clamoured to be let in. As the night was cold and rainy, the friars had pity on the men and had great difficulty in hindering the women also from entering within the enclosure. Those who went in begged to see the body of the saint and then followed the example of the friars and began to rob him of the little the friars had left him, that they might possess something that had once touched that temple of the Holy Ghost.

Early in the morning the corpse of the saint was brought down into the church for burial. The people fell on their knees, kissed his feet and touched his body with their rosaries. Father Sotomayor the Dominican came in and fell on his knees. He was one of those who saw the face of the saint shining in Baeza. The vision had been the beginning of his conversion. When he had knelt down he fell as one dead over the body. The friars removed him as quickly as they could and when he had recovered himself asked him why he had fainted away. He told them that he had made up his mind to cut off one of his fingers and that on his laying hold of it, the saint had drawn it back out of his hands as if he had been still living.

The whole neighborhood was aroused and the church was filled from end to end. Clergy, both secular and regular, noblemen and persons of less honor in the world, came together uninvited to see and venerate the body of the poorest man in all Spain. Mass was sung and Dr. Bezerra preached a sermon. At the close he said,

"I do not ask you, as the custom is, to pray to God for the soul of the departed, for he who is gone from us is a saint, and his soul is in Paradise; but what I ask is this, I ask you to follow in his footsteps and I ask him to obtain for us divine grace to do so."

When the body was to be borne to the grave there arose an eager contest among the religious for the honor of carrying it to its resting place within the church.

Afterward, the people crowded daily into the church to pray to the saint, but they would not tread on that part of the pavement under which his holy body was lying.

On the Monday night following the burial, when the lights had been put out and the friars were about to take the discipline, they were surprised by a great light which filled the whole church, and were seized with a holy fear, for they saw that it had come from the tomb of the saint, whose sepulcher was thus made glorious by the Lord. In a few minutes the

light disappeared and the friars took the discipline as usual, in the dark.

At the end of nine months the grave was opened and the body of the saint was found incorrupt.

Dona Ana de Penasola and her brother, Don Luis de Mercado, obtained an order from the vicar, Fra Nicolas de Jesus Maria, for its removal from Ubeda to Segovia. Dona Ana had a great devotion to the servant of God and wished to have the body of the saint placed in the house she had founded under his direction. She and her brother waited nine months more before they attempted to remove it, and then sent to Ubeda one of the king's sergeants to bring the remains.

Francis de Medina Zavallos, having received his instructions, went to Ubeda and, having seen the prior, produced the order of the vicar, who enjoined obedience and absolute silence. It was then arranged that the prior should admit Zavallos into the church at eleven o'clock at night, unknown to the community, and that two lay brothers should open the grave and raise the body. So it was done. When they had removed the stone they perceived a most fragrant perfume and when they reached the body they found it perfectly fresh and supple. There was no trace of corruption in it. It was impossible to take it away. Indeed, the order

was for the removal of the bones. But before it was put back, the prior, at the request of Zavallos, cut off one of the fingers, that he might give it to Dona Ana as a proof of the story he had to tell. The hand was full of blood, the blood flowing as freely as from the hand of a living person.

They waited nine months more and Zavallos was sent again to Ubeda. The grave was opened and the body was found nearly as they left it. The lime had indeed dried it but had not consumed the flesh. Zavallos took the body in a cloak-bag and went away. Near Martos he and his fellows were suddenly confronted by a man who cried out,

"Where are you going with the body of the saint? Let it remain where it was."

They passed on; not, however, without anxiety, because wherever they halted people asked them what it was they had with them, the perfume of the body was so wonderful. Having reached Madrid Zavallos gave it into the safe keeping of the Carmelite nuns. There Dona Ana had one of the arms cut off for a relic; but afterwards, having scruples about keeping it, sent it to Segovia.

In the monastery of the nuns in Madrid the body was treated with more respect than had been shown it in Ubeda. It was put in a coffin covered with flowers and branches of laurel,

that it might be sent to Segovia more reverently. The bearers were ordered to keep the secret and avoid all publicity in order to prevent a gathering of people when the relics should reach Segovia. This was impossible. Before they arrived near the city the secret was revealed. The people were attracted by the wondrous fragrance; and though the bearers of the body went to the monastery without going through the city, they were followed by a great multitude of men and women.

The friars of Segovia received the body with all honor and reverence and when they had cleansed it they vested it in the habit of the order and placed it in a fitting coffin. They exposed it in the main chapel and enclosed it in a grating so that the people might see it without reaching to it. They passed through the grating rosaries, crosses, medals, handkerchiefs and any other things they had at hand, to be touched to the sacred body that they might be kept as relics. In this way immense crowds of people came during eight days to see and venerate the holy body. One day, such was the gathering of people pressing against the grating that they broke it, and the religious had the greatest trouble preserving the sacred body from being carried away. To satisfy the multitudes the father prior distributed among them an old habit which the saint had used

when he lived in Segovia. Even the flowers and laurel twigs which the Carmelite sisters of Madrid had put on the coffin were carried away as precious relics. Some leaves of those laurel branches are still preserved today, as green and fresh as if they had just been cut from the tree.

CHAPTER THIRTY-SECOND

The City of Ubeda Reclaims the Body of St. John of the Cross. Segovia and Ubeda Are Reconciled Over the Dispute and Build Chapels To the Saint. Miracles and Wonderful Apparitions In Connection With the Relics.

As soon as the pious theft became known in Ubeda the city was so much offended that the authorities of the place appointed attorneys and sent them to Rome to obtain from the Pope a decree of restitution of the body to Ubeda. Clement VIII, the bishops of Ubeda and Segovia and the superiors of the order, to avoid rivalry between these two noble cities, made them compromise, so that Ubeda was to be satisfied with the legs and one of the arms of the saint and Segovia retained the head and trunk. Thus the body was divided and in both places chapels were built for the preservation of the sacred relics.

As said before, Dona Ana had one of the arms cut off for a relic. Meanwhile Francis de Yepes heard that the body of his brother had been brought to Segovia and went thither in the hope of seeing it. But the frairs would not satisfy his desires because of the orders of the vicar and his council. He then went to

Madrid and saw Dona Ana. She had now conceived some scruples about retaining the arm in her possession. Accordingly she gave a piece of the flesh to Francis and asked him to carry the arm to Segovia that it might be laid in the same place with the body. Francis, having placed the flesh in a glass, took the arm to Segovia. The prior of Segovia did not receive him very kindly and refused him the sight of his brother's body. So Francis took the arm to Medina and gave it to the Carmelite nuns who had been so generous to his own and the saint's mother.

One of the people's main reasons for honoring the saints is the miracles wrought by God through them. Our saint performed many and great miracles both during his life and after his death.

In the monastery of Malaga, Sister Mencia of St. Luis was suffering from a severe attack of palsy which had kept her in bed for ten years. In 1608 the father provincial, Fra Bernard of the Conception, went into the monastery for canonical visitation. Pitying the poor nun he said to her,

"Sister, revive your faith. God is going to cure you by the merits of St. John of the Cross."

Taking a finger of the saint which he carried with him, he placed it on her head. At the

same moment the nun felt such a wonderful sensation in all her body and found herself so perfectly cured that she rose from her bed and was able to follow the community exercises as if she never had been sick, greatly to the admiration of the provincial and her community.

In the year 1617 Dona Juana Godinez de Sandoval, sixteen years of age, was attacked suddenly by such a terrible fever and frenzy that she lost her senses and her mind, and was five days in that condition. The doctors tried all possible means to bring her back to her senses, but without result, and left her as a hopeless case. Two religious of Carmel came with the foot of St. John of the Cross and applied it to her chest. Instantly she sat up in her bed and embraced the holy relic and remained silent for some time. Then she said that when the relic was laid on her she heard somebody saying to her,

"By the merits of the holy father you are cured."

She cried out, "I am cured! My holy Father John of the Cross has cured me!"

She bade them give her her clothes and, as the maids delayed giving them to her, for they were surprised by the miracle, she put on a long cloak and, rising from her bed, walked in the room.

Realizing under what great obligations her parents felt the miracle had placed them, she obtained permission to become a Discalced Carmelite. To show her gratitude to God and to the saint, she changed her name on entering the order and called herself Joan of the Cross.

Not less wonderful was the miracle the Lord wrought on a son of Don Francisco de Navaez, called Rodrigo, twenty months of age, who, having fallen from a very high corridor, broke his neck and was bleeding from his mouth, nostrils and ears, while some of his brains were spattered on the floor. The child was in agony and beyond any hope when they applied the relic of the saint to his head. At its touch the blood ceased flowing. The head of the child and his bones grew together instantly and before two days he was as strong as ever.

Among the miracles of the saint, his apparitions to innumerable persons and the very great variety of visions of saints and religious objects that were seen by means of his relics have given much glory to God and honor to his saint. The venerable Francis de Yepes, his holy brother, carried about with him the glass in which he had placed a piece of his brother's flesh. Longing to see his brother, he gazed at the flesh and to his amazement saw, as if painted on it, the very likeness of the saint, not once, but ever afterwards. Our Lady also ap-

peared in the same way, with the infant in her arms. This was seen not only by Francis de Yepes, but by many others. Some, however, who gazed at the relic, saw nothing. Some saw our Lord on the cross, others a dove; some saw the saint himself on his knees before the crucifix. There were others who saw angels. Some saw St. Peter, others Elias the Prophet. Some saw St. Teresa, others St. Francis. Others again saw St. Francis Xavier. But amid these great diversities no one saw anything that was not holy or divine. Some again saw at one hour and not at another. Some saw always the same vision and to others the vision was changed. All were always impressed and numerous miracles were wrought. Once a Mahometan woman, then a slave in Spain, who had obstinately refused to become a Christian, was shown the relic.

She looked at it out of pure curiosity and then cried out, "Oh, beautiful lady, beautiful boy!"

She was touched by divine grace, was converted and baptized.

The Reverend Father John Baptist, O. C. D., was preaching during lent to some women of loose character and, after having preached the whole lent, could not move them to change their wicked life. He then asked them to see and venerate the relics of a saint.

Three of them consented and came forward. The father gave the relic to the first and as she

was looking at it she became as white as paper. The priest asked her what was the matter. She answered that she saw a woman weeping bitterly and near her a crucifix and a skull. Doubtless it was Mary Magdalene weeping for her sins. She also wanted to weep for her own sins. The second came and the same thing happened. The third was rather unwilling but, after some hesitation, came and saw nothing. She remained in her obstinacy and wicked life. The conversion of the two women was so sincere that, the following day, in the main church of the city, they confessed their wicked life before numerous people and begged pardon from God and from all the citizens of Calatayud.

In the city of Burgos a religious, looking at a relic of the saint, saw the figure of Christ our Redeemer. With the curiosity and boldness of the lukewarm, she took a pin and pricked the part where the figure of Christ was seen. Blood gushed out, causing her such great fear and confusion that she changed her lukewarm life and became a most holy religious.

We could relate many miracles wrought by the relics of St. John of the Cross but we leave them out for brevity's sake, finishing with one which shows how God wishes relics of the saints to be treated reverently.

In the convent of the Discalced Carmelite nuns of Granada one day after sunset the Rev-

erend Mother Mary of St. Paul observed that a brilliant light came forth from an image of St. Teresa and that the rays fell on a little paper on the floor. Taking up the piece of paper, she found a relic of the saint in it, which had been lost by a nun, as learned afterwards. This miracle was recognized as supernatural in the canonization of St. Teresa. It shows the providence of God over his saints, not permitting that the least particle of their bodies be lost or remain without due reverence.

St. John of the Cross was beatified in 1674 by Clement X and canonized by Benedict XIII, 27 December, 1726.

Laus Deo Virginique Matri.

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